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THE

THEOLOGICAL

AND

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF THE LATE REV.

WILLIAM JONES, M.A.

MINISTER OF NAYLAND, SUFFOLK.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF HIS

LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY WILLIAM STEVENS, ESQ.

A NEW EDITION.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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AN

ESSAY

ON THE

CHURCH.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good. PSALM CXXII.

PL... THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PREFACE.

THE three great subjects, with which a Christian Minister is concerned, are the Word of God, the Church of God, and the Christian Life. Circumstances and occasions will sometimes direct his thoughts to one of these, and sometimes to another: but so long as any of the three are before him, he is within the circle of his duty.

I was led to the subject of the following Essay, by an accident. I am a curate in a country parish; who make it my business, and have found it my pleasure, to teach the children of my people, privately in my own house, and publicly in the Church; and I am, for the present, the only *Sunday School-master* of the place. In the course of my instructions, I had occasion to observe, that the Catechism of the Church of England, though a most excellent summary of the Christian Doctrine, is deficient in one point, viz. *the Constitution of the Church of Christ;* the knowledge of which, in a certain degree, is necessary to the preservation of that *charity* which is the *end of the commandment;* and, for the want of which, so many are drawn away from the Church, who would certainly have remained with it, if they had known what it is. Yet is our Catechism not so deficient, but that it includes the grand distinction betwixt the *World* and the *Church:* which distinction being explained, I found we were possessed of a leading idea, which gave so much light to my young pupils, that I determined to go through the subject.

As I have been persuaded, ever since I began to think on these things, of the great importance of uniformity in worship amongst Christians: so have I been led to observe, on the other hand, the many evil consequences of non-conformity, with the dangerous

delusions of the mind, arising from the harangues of preachers pretending to extraordinary gifts, while they are but half-learned in the Gospel, which they undertake to publish, and are greatly mistaken in the spirit of it. I see how some men are cheated with the appearance of being converted to godliness; when they are only converted from one sin to another; from loving the world, to hating their neighbours; from the coldness of Church devotion, to an uncharitable heat against the Church itself; from the moral philosophy of some of our pulpits, to the Antinomian faith, which gives men a licence to sin; from the drunkenness of the body, to the intoxication of the mind, with spiritual pride and false doctrine.

I am well assured, that if this subject of the Church, now so much neglected, and almost forgotten by those who are most concerned to understand it, should come to be better considered; there would be more true piety, and more peace, more of those virtues which will be required in Heaven, and which must therefore be first learned upon earth.

Some amongst us err, because they *know not the Scriptures;* and others, because they never considered the nature of the Church. Some think they can make their own religion, and so they despise the word of God, and fall into infidelity. Others think they can make their own Church, or even be a Church unto themselves; and so they fall into the delusions of enthusiasm, or the uncharitableness of schism. But, as there is nothing to enlighten the minds of men in the doctrines of salvation, but the word of God; so is there nothing that can unite their hearts and affections, but the Church of God. *Ye are one bread, and one body,* saith the Apostle; one body by partaking of one bread; and that can only be in the same communion.

In the weighing of these things, the prevailing spirit of the times, and the sanction which it may have given either to the profligate sinner, or to the presumptuous saint, are of no account upon the scale. In the settling of principles, we are never to consider how the world hath practised, but how God hath taught. The practice of the multitude, how great soever that multitude may be, hath no influence upon truth: yet it will stagger the minds of many, and carry them away, as with an overbearing torrent. Happy are they who have a better

rule to direct them. They know that man *applauds, highly* applauds, what *God abominates:* and the higher the applause, the more room there is for suspicion. They know that the voice of the multitude was against Jesus Christ, when but few were for him; and they had hid themselves, and dared not to speak their minds. When Noah followed the direction of God in building the ark, for the saving of his house, the world was against him. To them no ark was necessary, because they had determined amongst themselves, that there would be no flood; and, consequently, that Noah was a bigot, whose undertaking, while it exposed himself, was an invidious reflection upon the age. When the father of the faithful followed the calling of God, there were none to stand by him and encourage him; he was separated from his nearest relations; and wheresoever he went, he was under fears and dangers from people of a false persuasion. When Jesus Christ brought with him from heaven, that light which was to be the glory of his people, one ruler of the Jews came to him by stealth in the night, to consult him as a teacher, come from God. So great was the authority of a blinded multitude, that a ruler of the people was afraid of being brought into disgrace, by conversing personally with the Saviour of the world!

The times, therefore, and the people who live in them, are never to be considered by us, when we are seeking or following the truth, on the ground of its own proper evidence. When it was asked, with a design to perplex the people, who, *of the Rulers*, or of *the Pharisees*, had believed? Our Saviour gave them a different rule: why do ye not *of yourselves*, said he, *judge what is right;* without going first to consult those, who are blinded by false learning, and, with an appearance of great sanctity, have imposed upon the people? "See," saith one, "how fast our doctrine is increasing! all the learned are going after it; and you must all submit to it in a very short time." And who are they that thus reason with us? The very same persons, who declaim so loudly on the fallibility of all men; and yet hold themselves to be little less than infallible in the choice of their own opinions. Let error rise as high as it can; and let truth sink as low as a wicked world can reduce it; the difference between them is the same as ever; and we shall still find it wiser and better to follow the setting sun,

as *Columbus* did when he discovered the Indies. The meteor of heresy, which blazes, and dazzles us for a while with its appearance, will burn out, and leave not a spark behind; while the sun only sets to rise again. Such will be the fate of the Church, and of the doctrines of truth by which it is supported.

There never was a time from the beginning of the world, when there was not a party against the Church of God; and our Israel must have its enemies, as that Church had which came out of Egypt. In the first age of the Gospel, the Apostle St. *Jude* spoke experimentally of those whom he then saw, or prophetically of those whom we should see, that they *go in the way of Cain*, and run after the *error of Balaam*, and perish in the *gainsaying of Corah*. If our governors were as cruel as *Pharaoh*, some would rejoice at it, and upbraid us with every disadvantage we might be under from hard usage; as a sign that the Church is a thing of no consequence, and that all those who belong to it are the vassals of the state. If the Church were as pure as *Abel*, the envy and jealousy of *Cain* would hate its offerings and sacrifices. If its order and œconomy were as perfect as in that Church which covered the face of the earth in its passage to Canaan, the self-interested spirit of the mercenary *Balaam* would endeavour to bring a curse upon it, and blast its greatness. If its governors were as manifestly supported in their commission, as *Moses* and *Aaron*, the spiritual pride of *Corah* would set up the holiness of the congregation against its priesthood, and the power of the people against the civil magistrate, who gives it protection. But none of these things ought to stagger or surprize a reader of the Scripture; they are all to be expected: *these things were our examples:* and the Church would not be the Church of God, if there were none to rise up against it.

With these considerations in his mind, and not without them, a reader will be prepared to examine what I have written upon the Church. If any of our dissenting brethren should look into this little piece, and find the matter so represented as to engage their attention; my prayer shall be with them, that God may give them the grace to cast out the bitter leaven of a party spirit; to lay aside all temporal motives and interests, and consider the Church (as I have done) only so far as it is

related to the *other world.* To any particular or national Church, all temporal alliances are but momentary considerations, which pass away with the fashion of this world; and the Church may be either with them, or without them, as it was in the first ages: but the Church itself, under the relation it bears to Jesus Christ, abideth for ever.

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PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL

ESSAY

ON THE

CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH; WITH THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF BOTH SOCIETIES.

Two things of a contrary nature are best understood when they are placed near to one another, or compared together in the mind. The summer is better understood, and more to be valued, when we compare it with the winter; a season in which so many comforts are wanting, which the summer affords us. The blessings of government are more acceptable, when compared with the miseries of anarchy. We have the like advantage, when we compare together the *Church* and the *world*, those two societies of which we are members; of the world by our natural birth; of the Church by our spiritual birth in baptism. When we are admitted into the Christian covenant, we renounce this world as a *wicked* world, and become members of the Church, which is called the *holy* Church. Both these societies are influential on those who be-

long to them; the one corrupts, the other sanctifies: therefore it is of the last importance to mankind to consider and understand the difference between them.

If we ask, why the world is called wicked, we shall find it to be such from the nature and manners of its inhabitants: for the world, as it means the system of the visible creation, can have no harm in it. There can be no wickedness, where there is no moral agency nor freedom of action.

From the sin of Adam, and the effects of his fall, the state of man by nature is a state of sin. The Scripture is so express in this, that it is not necessary to insist upon it. A disposition to evil comes into the world with every man, and is as a seed, which brings forth its fruit throughout the course of his life. Many evil passions disturb and agitate his mind; and from the ignorance or darkness which prevails in him, he knows not that he is to resist them in order to his peace and happiness, nor hath he ability so to do, if he did know it. The worst and the most violent of all his passions is pride, which affects superiority, and delights in vain shew and pompous distinction; whether it be that of wealth, or honour, or wisdom. Covetousness disposes him to take all he can to himself, and pay no regard to the wants of others; whence the state of nature is a state of war, in which men plunder and destroy one another; not knowing the way of peace, which consists only with restraint, and must be taught them from above: *the way of peace have they not known,* saith the Scripture.

Man knows all things by education, but nothing by nature, except as the Apostle saith, what *he knoweth naturally as a brute beast.* The world as we see it now, is under the restraint of laws, which in some countries are better in themselves and better executed

than in others: but if there were no laws and no governments to execute them, then we should see what a scene of destruction and misery this world would be, through the sinfulness of man's nature. Fraud, rapine, and cruelty, those three dreadful monsters, make strange havock amongst us, notwithstanding the laws and regulations of society: what then would this world be without them?

With respect to God, the state of man is a state of rebellion, alienation, and condemnation. His ways are so opposite to the will of God, that he is said to be *at enmity* with him. He has no alliance with his Maker, either as a child, a subject, or a servant; but being under a general law of disobedience, can inherit nothing from God but wrath and punishment.

You will see this account verified by the plainest declarations of the Scripture.—First, as to the enmity of the world against God. *If the world hate you,* saith our Lord when he came to save it, *ye know that it hated me before it hated you.* Secondly, as to their alienation or departure from all alliance with him—*you that were some time alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works;* saith St. *Paul,* Col. i. 21: and again, speaking of the natural state of the *Ephesians* before their conversion, he describes them as *aliens* and *strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* In which passage, there is something farther than appears from the sound of the words; for when we read, *without God in the world,* the words, *in the world,* are emphatical, and denote this *wicked world,* such as we have been describing it, of which they that are members must of course be without God, and without hope: they belong to a society which knows him not.

Then, thirdly, that the world is under condemna-

tion; *we are chastened of the Lord,* saith St. Paul, *that we should not be condemned with the world:* whence it is evident, that the world, as such, is under condemnation, and can expect nothing of God, but punishment for sin.

We are now prepared to take a review of this society called the world. It is composed of men lost by the fall; disposed to all manner of evil; ignorant of the way of peace; at enmity with God, and with one another; delighting themselves in the pride of appearance, and the vanity of distinction. In a word, *the whole world lieth in wickedness,* and they that are condemned for sin will be condemned *with the world,* whose condemnation, therefore, is a thing of course. What human philosophy may say of this description of the world, we are not to regard: if it is the description which stands in the Holy Scripture, we are not to consider what men may say of it. A proud world will never be pleased to see an humiliating description of itself.

Such then is the world, and such are we all, so far as we are members of it. God, therefore, of his infinite mercy, takes us out of this wicked society, and *translates* us into another. He *delivers us from the power of darkness, and translates us into the kingdom of his dear Son;* and without this translation we are inevitably lost. You are here to observe, that the *kingdom* of Christ is one of the names of his *church;* and they that are in it, as it is distinguished from the world, are called *children of the kingdom.* Its nature is totally different from the kingdoms of this world (of which we shall see more hereafter) for as the world is called *wicked,* so the Church is called holy, and all the holiness that can be in man, must be derived from thence. If we enquire how, and in what respects, the

Church is holy, we find it must be so from its relation to God. It is called the *Church of God,* and he being holy, every thing that belongs to him must be so of course. And further, it is a society, or body, of which the Holy Spirit is the life; and this life being communicated to those who are taken into the Church, they are thereby made partakers of an holy life, which is elsewhere called *the life of God;* from which life they are *alienated* who are out of this society. It is holy in its sacraments; our baptism is an holy baptism, from the Holy Spirit of God; the Lord's Supper is an holy sacrifice; the ordinance of absolution is for the forgiveness of past sin, that the members of the Church may be recovered from sin to a state of holiness, and peace with God. The Church is holy in its priesthood; all the offices of which are for the sanctification of the people.

The contrary nature of the two societies I have been speaking of, will now be better understood when they are compared together. In the one, men are in a lost condition; in the other, they are in a state of salvation: for as the world is *alienated from God,* the Church is in alliance and covenant with him, and partaker of his promises. As the world is under condemnation, the Church is under grace and pardon of sin: its baptism washes away original sin, and gives a new birth to purity and righteousness; its other sacrament of the Lord's Supper maintains that spiritual life which is begun at baptism, as meat and drink support the life we receive at our natural birth. As the world is *without hope,* the Christian hath *hope in death,* through the Resurrection of Christ, and is assured, that he who is united to the life of God can never die: for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. While the wicked are to perish with the world which they

inhabit, the children of God are *heirs with Christ of an eternal kingdom.*

The Church is also holy, when by the word Church, we understand the building or place in which the people assemble to accomplish the service of God. As the world, on the other hand, hath always had its unholy places of assembly, its theatre, its idol temples, &c. which unsanctify and pollute those who frequent them. Under the Jewish State of the Church, the temple is called the *holy temple,* or *holy place; (Heb.)* and a part of it was called the *most holy place.* Our Saviour allows that the temple *sanctified the gold,* which was offered in it, and consequently all other offerings and sacrifices there made. Now, if that temple was holy, whose glory was to be done away, certainly the place of Christian worship, called the Church, must be holy also. For why was the Temple at Jerusalem holy, but because the presence of God attended it? And has he not promised to be in the midst of us? And must not our churches therefore be holy upon the same account? And are they not guilty of a great sin, who treat any Church with irreverence? Much more if they despise or defile it? For it is said, he *that defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy.*

But nothing will shew us the difference between the world and the Church so effectually, as when we consider who is at the head of each society. Christ is the *head of the Church,* and the Devil is the *prince of this world,* who is also called the *God of this world.* They who are in the Church, are in the kingdom of Christ; which, though not *of* this world, as not deriving its power from thence, is yet *in* the world. They who are *of this world,* are in the kingdom of Satan, and under his power: as the heathens are said to have been before they were redeemed from it, and brought

over to the kingdom of God; which translation was signified by the redemption of the Hebrews, from under the power of Pharaoh.

If we enquire into the respective characters of the head of the church, and the prince of this world, as they are described under a variety of names, the opposition is wonderful; and it will be found very instructive, because there is the same opposition betwixt the children of each.

The head of the church is called *Jesus* the *Saviour:* the head of this world is a *destroyer;* in Hebrew, *Abaddon:* in Greek, *Apollyon.*

The one is the *true light,* that is, a spiritual light to the soul of man; the other is the *prince of darkness.*

The one is a *shepherd,* gathering the lambs with his arm, and feeding his flock; the other is a *lion* who goeth to and fro in the earth, *seeking whom he may devour.*

The one is a *lamb,* meek, innocent, and spotless: the other is a *serpent,* deceitful, subtle, and with poison under his lips.

The one is the physician of souls, who went about healing the sick, and raising the dead: the other is the inflicter of diseases, *bowing* men down with infirmities; binding them with the bonds of affliction; and was *a murderer from the beginning;* for he brought death into the world, by the temptation of man in Paradise. Men murder individuals; but Satan murders the whole world at once: and is the prince of murderers.

The one delivers men who are under temptation to sin, the other is the *tempter,* who leads them into it. And as the one is the *advocate* of sinners, interceding for them as their *priest* and *mediator;* the

other is the grand *accuser,* who is therefore called the *Devil,* which signifies an accuser.

And lastly (for I think we need go no farther at present) the one is the *truth,* the other is a *liar, and the father of lies.*

The like difference is found in the children of this world, and the children of the kingdom of God: that is, between the *wicked world,* who are under the *power of Satan,* and the *Holy Church,* which is the *flock of Christ,* and takes him for its pattern. It cannot be otherwise; the spirit of the head must be diffused through the members: and you will see it to be true: first, with respect to the Holy Church of Christ; whose disciples are taught to relieve one another in their wants, and save one another in their distress; rejoicing and suffering together, as the members of the same body; and doing good unto all men. His ministers are *shepherds;* his followers, from the first ages of Christianity, were *accounted* and treated as *sheep for the slaughter,* and were patient and unresisting. They exhort and encourage one another to good works, and being united together under a bond of peace, their *charity covereth a multitude of sins;* that is, it hideth and concealeth the many failings of their brethren for the love of Christ, instead of aggravating their offences, and judging them unmercifully. They are children of light, who derive the light of wisdom from the word of God; and walk openly and honestly, as in the day. In their conversation, they are true and faithful, and give you a direct answer, without disguise or subterfuge.

Such ought to be the members of the holy Church of Christ; this is the character intended for them, though many fall short of it, and some totally depart from it. But the visible church-membership of men,

does not depend upon their manners and opinions; nor indeed upon any thing they can do for themselves; because it is the gift of God, by his ministers; so that a man in a holy church may be an unholy man; for the kingdom of heaven, or church of Christ, is like a net cast into the sea, which gathers of every kind both bad and good; and an effectual separation is never made between them, till the angels drag this net to the shore, to gather the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. If we bear this case in mind, it will deliver us from a great deal of perplexity. It is truly a sorrowful fact, that the children of God, in too many instances, depart from their proper character: but the character proper to the world is, in all respects, like that of Satan, wicked and miserable.

As the Devil is the prince of this world, his children set their affections upon it; and it is the main purpose of their lives to obtain and enjoy it at any rate. For this they sell their souls, and if they get the world in exchange, they think they are gainers by the bargain.

As he is the prince of darkness, so do they fall into ignorance, and blindness of heart, and love darkness rather than light, that their deeds may not be reproved. They hate the word of God, as owls and bats hate the day-light; and dispute fiercely for their errors, lest information and conviction should bring them to repentance.

As the Devil is a *destroyer*, so do the children of this world destroy one another. Their wise politics produce war and desolation; their error and delusion of mind stir them up to the persecution of the servants of God: and wherever we see oppression, and cruelty, and persecution, there we see the spirit of the Devil, the father of persecution, who, by violence, will terrify and compel, where he cannot persuade.

As he is a serpent, so his children are a generation of vipers, double-tongued, and deceitful: smooth and flattering on some occasions, but waiting to give a deadly bite when they are offended and provoked. Their way is crooked and uncertain, like the path of a serpent. An honest man, whose path is direct and plain, can never tell what to make of them, because they pretend to be going one way, while they are going another: and they often gain their end by it; as the twistings of the serpent carry him to the point he aims at.

As Lucifer fell from heaven for rebellion, all his children are impatient under authority; and in this capacity they are called *sons of Belial;* which means, that they can bear no superior. Patience, and obedience, and submission, are essential to the Christian character. Christ himself is our pattern, who allowed that the power of Pilate, so unjustly exercised, was *given him from above,* and submitted to his sentence, when he could have struck him dead upon his bench. But resistance is the Devil's doctrine, and the world's practice. The Gospel teaches us, that the things which are highly esteemed among men are an abomination in the sight of God, and here we see it verified; nothing is more detestable to the God of peace, than the sin of rebellion; and nothing is more magnified and applauded by the children of this world; who have set what they call *the power of the people,* above the power of God Almighty. He ordains government, and kings are his ministers; but the people are told, that they have power to overthrow his ordinance, and judge his vicegerents.

As the Devil is a *tempter,* his children act under him in that capacity; most wicked men have a strange desire to make all others as wicked as themselves. The

world is full of seducers, who tempt men to false principles, and immorality of life. Some get their livelihood by the corruption of other people; and most infidels and heretics are so diligent in spreading their opinions, that if the friends of truth were equally zealous, the world would not be able to stand against them.

As the devil is the grand accuser, so doth the world delight itself in evil-speaking. Railing and slandering is their great amusement. Evil words are not pointed against evil things. The world delights to asperse those, who are unlike to themselves. There never was a good man, nor ever will be, who was not evil spoken of, and depreciated in the judgment of the public; and the rule is so universal, that our Saviour saith to all Christians, *Woe be unto you, when all men speak well of you.* False prophets were well spoken of by the people; and there must be something false and spurious, some *evil with the appearance of good* *, in every popular character that pleases the world.

As the devil is the father of lies, so all they that are of the Devil are liars, who will never make a scruple of a lie to hurt others, or serve themselves. The whole Heathen religion was one great lie, in opposition to the truth of the Divine law. Much evil is threatened to those who put evil for good, and good for evil; who make the heart of the righteous sad, by predicting evil to them, and by promising happiness and prosperity to the wicked. Thus did they speak of old, who were called *false Prophets;* and it would be happy for us if there were none of them amongst us: but, wherever they are found, they are the ministers of Satan: and however fair and fine they may

* Καλον κακον αντ' αγαθοιο. Hesiod.

speak on some occasions, it is no proof of their goodness; for Satan is sometimes, as it serves his purpose, *transformed into an angel of light,* and affects an holy and heavenly character; and then he is most a Devil, because he can most deceive.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE MEANS OF GRACE, AND THE MARKS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS TO BE KNOWN.

HAVING explained the nature of these two societies, the Holy Church and the wicked World; we must consider the use of the Church, and the marks by which it is to be known. It is promised, *that he who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* But how shall we have this baptism, unless we have it from those whom God hath appointed to baptize? It is also promised, *he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life:* and how shall we receive the body and blood of Christ, but from the Church, to whom he said, when he instituted the Lord's Supper, *Do this in remembrance of me?* This being the commemorative Sacrifice of the New Testament, it can be offered only by a priest: and all the world cannot make a priest. The ministers of the Old Testament were ordained to their office by an immediate commission from God to Moses, the Mediator of that time betwixt God and the people. The ministers of the New Testament were ordained by Christ himself; from whom the authority descended to others, and

shall reach through a variety of hands, to the *end of the world.*

This is the way God hath been pleased to take, to make men holy, and bring them to himself, through this dangerous world, as he brought Noah and his family out of the old world into the new, by means of an ark, which was a figure of his Church. It is therefore of infinite consequence, that we should be able to know, with certainty, whether we are in the Church or out of it. If we are out of it, we are *in the world.* If we had been out of the ark, we should have been drowned. It is true, we may be in the Church, and yet be lost; for was not Ham in the ark, who was a reprobate? But if we are out of the Church, how can we be saved?

I would not, for the whole world, unworthy as I am; I say, I would not, for the whole world, and all the kingdoms of it, be in doubt whether I was *translated,* or not, into the *kingdom* of Jesus Christ. I would not be in doubt, whether I have the *Sacraments,* or whether I have them not. But how can I be sure in this case, unless I know *what* the kingdom of Christ is; *where* it is to be found; and what are the *marks* by which it may be known? Many strange abuses in religion have arisen on occasion, and under the specious name of, *the Reformation;* a very good word; but it hath been applied to a great many bad things, even to madness and blasphemy. We are fallen into times when some say, *lo, here is Christ,* or, *lo, there;* in the *desert;* or in the *secret chambers;* and are bid to *take heed* that no man *deceive* us. What a terrible case should we be in, if we had no sufficient warnings given to us, and no rule to go by! But as the lightning which cometh from the East shineth unto the West, so plain and notorious was the establishment of Christ's king

dom in this world; together with the form of its constitution, and the orders of its ministry, in all the countries wherever it was planted. It would be unreasonable; indeed it would be lamentable; it would seem as if God had mocked us, contrary to the nature of his mercy, that he should publish a way of salvation, and leave it uncertain where it is to be found.

From what is said of it in the Gospel, it is impossible that the Church should be a society obscure and hard to be distinguished. *Ye are the light of the world,* said Christ to his disciples, *a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.* Light is sure to shew itself; and it comes in strait lines, which direct us to its source. A city placed upon a mountain is so elevated above other objects, that it cannot be difficult to find it; rather it is impossible to miss it; it *cannot be hid:* and Christian people in all ages seem to have agreed, that it shall not be hid: for when we approach a city in any part of Christendom, the churches are generally first seen towering over all other buildings.

Christ has given us a precept, that under certain circumstances, we should *tell* our case to the *Church:* but unless it be known what and where the Church is, this cannot be done. The precept therefore supposes, that the Church must be known to us. The same must follow from the injunction of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews.—*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.* Chap. xiii. 17. The Rulers of the Church must therefore be known to us: for it is impossible we should do our duty, and submit ourselves to them, unless we are sure who they are.

The Church then must, in its nature, be a society manifest to all men. Some may slight it, and despise

it, and refuse to hear it; but they cannot do even this, unless they know where it is to be found.

When we enquire more particularly what the Church is, it may be best to proceed as we are obliged to do in some other cases; first, to learn what it is not; that we may go upon right ground, and understand with more certainty what it is.

The Church then, as a society, is not the work of man; nor can it possibly be so. I have laid the foundation of all my reasonings upon this subject, in the distinction betwixt the Church and the World, as two separate parties. The Church is so named *, because it is *called* or *chosen out of* the world. Till it is so called out of the world, it hath no being; but it cannot call itself, any more than a man can bring himself into the world.

Our Christian calling is as truly the work of God, and as much independent of ourselves as our natural birth. The Church must have orders in it for the work of the ministry: but no man can ordain himself, neither can he (of himself) ordain another, because no man can give what he hath not. *How shall they preach,* saith the Scripture, *unless they be sent?* And again, *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is* called *of God, as was Aaron.* Nay, even *Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest,* but *he that said unto him, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* The Church must have *promises,* without which it can have no reason or encouragement to act: but no man can give it those promises; which are *exceeding great and precious.* The Church must have *power,* without which it can do nothing to any effect: but there is *no power but of God.* It must have power to forgive sins; the *forgiveness of sins* in

* In Greek Εκκλησια.

the Holy Catholic Church, being an article of the Apostles' Creed: but *who can forgive sins, but God only?* It must act in the name of God, or not at all: because it acts for the salvation of man; but no man can act in the name of God, but by God's appointment. No ambassador ever sent himself, or took upon him to sign or seal treaties and covenants (such as the Sacraments of the Church are) without being sent; that is, without receiving authority so to do, from an higher power. The act would be so far from beneficial, that it would be treasonable. If an army were to raise itself without commissions, what would such an army be but a company of banditti, leagued together to plunder and destroy the honest subjects of an established community?

Nothing therefore is plainer, on these considerations, than that the Church neither is, nor can be from man. It is no human institution; and as it acts under God, if it acts at all, it must act by his authority and appointment. It is properly called the *Church of God,* (of the *living God,* in opposition to the profane societies self-erected for the worship of dead idols) and mankind might as reasonably presume to make God's World as to make God's Church.

Farther enquiry will shew us that the Church is no confused multitude of people, independent of one another, and subject to no common rules: but a regular society, like to other societies, in some respects, and unlike them all in others. It is called *a body, a family, a city, a kingdom.* A body is a regular structure, the limbs of which being joined together, are subordinate and subservient to one another, and are animated by the same soul or spirit. So saith the Apostle, *for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.* 1 Cor. xii. 13. It being also called a *family,* the

members of it must have some common *relation* to one another: being called a *city*, it must be *incorporated* under some common *laws;* and being a *kingdom*, it must have some form of *government* and magistracy. Families, cities, and kingdoms are societies; and the Church, being represented by them, must be a regular society. But in this the Church differs from all other societies, because they belong to this world, and their rights and privileges are confined to it: whereas the Church extends to both worlds, the visible and the invisible, and is partly on earth, and partly in Heaven. In its earthly members, it is visible; in its rulers, it is visible; in its worship, it is visible; in its sacraments, it is visible. But being also a spiritual society, it hath a *life* which is *hidden*, and in the inward and spiritual Grace of all its outward ordinances it is invisible. As a kingdom in which God is Judge, and Christ is a Mediator, and Angels and Saints departed, are members; it takes in the heaven itself, and is the *heavenly Jerusalem*, which is the *mother of us all;* insomuch, that when we are admitted into it, our *conversation is in Heaven*, and the Angels of Heaven are our *fellow-servants;* all making one great family under Jesus Christ, in whom *all things are gathered together in one, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth:* on which consideration, what is rightly done in the Church on earth, stands good in Heaven, as if it had been done there; and the Apostles of Christ received from him the *keys of the kingdom of Heaven*, with a power of *binding* and *loosing*, which extends to Heaven itself: and when Christians go to Heaven, they are not carried into a new society, for they are already, by the grace of God, translated into it by baptism; whence the Apostle speaks of their translation, not as a thing expected,

but even now brought to pass. He *hath translated us, &c.* Col. i. 13.

The Church doth also differ from other societies, in that it is catholic or universal; it extends to all places, and all times, and is not confined to the people of any nation, or condition of life, but takes in Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free; and is therefore properly signified in one of our Saviour's parables by an *inn*, where all that offer themselves are accepted. The commission of Christ to his Apostles, was to *teach and baptize all nations.*

The Church being a kingdom, not *of* this world, is of a spiritual nature, and in that capacity it is invisible; but as a kingdom *in* this world, it is visible, and must have a visible administration. To know what this is, and whence its authority is derived, we must go back to the Gospel itself.

Jesus Christ was sent from Heaven by the Father, and invested with the glory of the priesthood by an actual consecration, when the Spirit descended upon him. As the Father hath sent him, *so did he send his disciples*, and gave them authority to send others: so that the Church which followed, derived its authority from the Church which Christ first planted in the world; and the Church at this day must derive its authority after the same manner, by succession from the Church which went before; the line extending from Christ himself to the end of the world: *lo*, said he, *I am with you always, unto the end of the world:* certainly, not with those very persons, who all soon died, but with those who should succeed, and be accounted for the same; for a body corporate never dies, till its succession is extinct *.

* "Take away this succession, and the Clergy may as well be ordained by one person as another: a number of women may as

Our Saviour at first ordained his twelve Apostles according to the number of the tribes of the Church of Israel. Afterwards he ordained other seventy, according to the number of the Elders, whom Moses appointed as his assistants. When the Church in Jerusalem was multiplied, seven Deacons were ordained, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, to preach, and baptize, and minister, in distributing the alms of the Church. Here then we have three orders of men, each distinct from the other; the twelve Apostles, the seventy Disciples, and the seven Deacons: and by these the first Christian Church in Jerusalem was governed and administered. The Apostles were superior in office to the Disciples; because, when Judas fell from the apostleship, one was chosen by lot out of the Disciples into the apostleship: the Deacons were inferior to both; and it appears that they were appointed by the laying on of the hands of the twelve Apostles: for it is said, Acts vi. 2, "*the Twelve* called the multitude of the Disciples unto them," &c.—That the Apostles appointed others to succeed to their own order is evident from the case of Timothy; who in the ancient superscription, at the end of the second Epistle, is said to have been *ordained the first Bishop* of the Church of the Ephesians. He is admonished *to lay hands suddenly on no man;* therefore he had power to ordain: and he is likewise admonished not to *receive an accusation against an Elder* (or Presbyter), *but before two or three witnesses:* therefore he had a judicial authority over that order. Directions are given with re-

well give them a divine commission;—but they are no more Priests of God, than those who pretend to make them so. If we had lost the Scriptures, it would be very well to make as good books as we could, and come as near them as possible: but then it would not only be folly, but presumption, to call them the word of God." See the *Second Letter to the Bishop of Bangor:* Postscript.

spect to the Deacons of the same Church; therefore, in the first Church of the Ephesians, there was a Bishop, with Elders and Deacons under him; as in the Church which began at Jerusalem, there was the order of the Apostles, of the Disciples, and of the Deacons. In the Christian Church, throughout the world, we find these three orders of ministers for fifteen hundred years, without interruption. The fact therefore is undeniable, that the Church has been governed by Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, from the Apostles downwards; and where we find these orders of ministers duly appointed, the word preached, and the sacraments administered, there we find the Church of Christ, with its form, and its authority.

The wisdom of God is here very evident, in appointing the orders of the Christian ministry after the pattern of the Jewish Church, which was of his own appointment so long before.—That there might be no uncertainty in a case of such consequence to the souls of men, there was no novelty, but a continuation of the like administration with that which had all along been known and acknowledged in the Church. *Aaron* was an *High Priest,* with a ministry peculiar to himself; under him there was an order of *Priests,* twenty-four in number, who served *by course* in the daily sacrifices and devotions of the Tabernacle and Temple; and these were assisted by ten whole tribes of the *Levites.* As the law had its passover, its baptisms, its incense, its sacrifices, its consecration, its benedictions, all to be realized under the sacraments and offerings of the Gospel; so its ministry was but a pattern of the ministry which is now amongst us; and we cannot mistake the one, if we have an eye on the other; such is the goodness of God in directing and keeping us, through all the confusions of the latter

days, by a rule of such great antiquity, to the way of truth, and keeping us in it.

The great use of the Church is to receive and minister to the salvation of those who are taken out of the world; but this it cannot do without the truth of the Christian doctrine; the Church is therefore as an instrument, or candlestick, for the holding and preserving of this sacred light. It is called the *pillar and ground of the truth;* not as if it had any right of making or imposing doctrines of its own; for the ground and the pillar do not make the roof, they only support it; nor doth the candlestick make the light, it only holds the light. And these similitudes will be found just, if we pursue them farther; for as when the pillars are removed, the building must fall; and when the lamp or the candlestick is broken, the light will be extinct: so if the Church be taken away, the truth falls along with it; as we have seen, and do see, in this country. Our Quakers, who are farthest from the Church, are totally departed from the truth of Christian doctrine; and many of those separate congregations, who were Puritans and Believers in the last age, are Socinians and Infidels in this; a consideration which should prevail upon sincere people of all persuasions, who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, to lay aside their animosity, and unite against the Socinians, who are the common enemies of all Christian people, and are now endeavouring to overthrow the faith of our creeds and articles.

When we speak of the *use* of the Church, we should never forget the great benefit and information which arises from the *fasts* and *festivals* of the Church: (totally neglected by the sectaries) by the course of which the piety of the Christians is directed to all the great subjects of the Gospel: some of which might other-

wise never be revived in our thoughts during the whole year. But the Church spends its year with Jesus Christ, and follows him in faith, through all the great works of his mediatorial office, from his *Advent* to the sending down of the Holy Ghost on the day of *Pentecost.* On this ground, the work of Mr. *Nelson* is of great value to all Christian families; and we have reason to hope it will never fall into disuse: though all persons fanatically inclined, are very cold to the merits of it, and the sectaries, it is to be supposed, must reject it on their own principles.

Here I must add, that the wisdom of God is farther manifest, in appointing a provision for his ministers, *independent of the people.* The maintenance of the Jewish priesthood was from God; for the tithes and offerings, on which they lived, were first *dedicated* to God, and *from him* transferred for the support of his ministry. So doth he himself state the case by the prophet: *Ye have robbed me,* saith he, *in tithes and offerings;* as if they were his own property: and so they were; for being dedicated to God, the first proprietor of all things, they belong to him before they belong to his Church. The wisdom and piety of Christian states followed the rule of the Scripture from the earliest times: and it still obtains in this country. And what would be the consequence if it were not so? While the minister depends only upon the God to whom he is accountable, he dares speak the truth: but where he is dependent on the people, and the people are corrupt, then he must accommodate himself to their fancy. For this reason, if the people of a congregation, who choose their own minister, fall into heresy, they rarely or never get out of it, because they will bear no teacher, but one who is of their own persuasion, and will flatter them in their errors.

I have nothing more to say upon the nature of the Church, but to shew the extent of its authority. Every society must have power over its own members, to *admit* or *exclude* as the case requires; it cannot otherwise subsist. The Church, from the days of the Apostles, always exercised the power of excommunicating notorious offenders, and of absolving and restoring true penitents. Excommunication is nothing but a reversing of baptism; and they who have authority to baptize, must have authority to excommunicate. The Church must also have authority in directing its own worship and services, as to time, place, and ceremonies.—*Let all things be done decently and in order:* but what is *decency,* and what is *order,* is not specified, and must be left to the discretion of the rulers of the Church. The Church has no authority to ordain any thing contrary to the law of God; nor doth the law of God depend upon the authority of the Church. There are three sorts of things about which the Church is conversant; *good, bad,* and *indifferent:* the good oblige by their own nature; the bad cannot be enforced by any authority: therefore the authority of the Church must extend to things indifferent, that is to order and discipline, to circumstances of time, place, forms of worship, ceremonies, and such like; and to disobey because they are indifferent is to deny that God hath given power to his Church to regulate any one thing whatsoever.

Ought we not, on the foregoing considerations, to magnify the goodness and wisdom of God, who hath provided a Church for the reception of lost mankind, and given to it the light of truth, and the means of grace? No subject can be plainer than this of the nature and constitution of the Church; and the necessity of its ministry and ordinances to the salvation of

man, and the preservation of truth, charity, peace, and godliness, is as clear as the sun. What a blessed thing it would be for us, if all people could see this! What temptations, corruptions, tumults, and miseries, would it prevent amongst mankind! But alas! they are ever ingenious in defeating the purposes of God for their own good. They have ways and expedients, not only of making themselves easy without the benefits of the Christian Church, but of actually casting them all off with a high hand, as needless, superstitious, dangerous, and even sinful, and antichristian; not helps to salvation, but hindrances. How this matter is, and with what reasonings they deceive themselves; we shall discover with very little inquiry.

CHAPTER III.

THE ERRORS WHICH TEMPT MEN TO LEAVE THE CHURCH, AND MAKE THEM EASY WHEN THEY ARE SEPARATED FROM IT.

THE means of grace, and the promises of God, being with his Church, they who would be partakers of them, must apply to the Church: and who would not? Who would not willingly flee from Sodom on fire to take refuge in Zoar? When the storm is abroad, the beasts have sense to fly to a place of shelter: and as the wrath of God is denounced against this world, men must be enemies to themselves, if they refuse to be delivered in the way which God hath appointed. But we know nothing of this world, if we think all men are friends to their own spiritual interest. Many will rather have recourse to their own imaginations: and when pride hath got possession of them, they are above being directed.

The example of Naaman is very instructive on this part of our subject. When he was ordered to seek the cure of his leprosy, by washing seven times in Jordan, the proud Syrian refused to comply with the ceremony, because he could not see how it should have

any effect. Nevertheless, when he had thought better of it, that ceremony, unaccountable and useless as it might seem to his carnal reason, cured him of his distemper. By the Church and its ordinances, every Christian is put to the same trial; whether he will submit to such things as reason cannot account for? Whether he will look for an effect, to which the cause is not adequate, without the interposition of an invisible power? The children of God are still exercised by this trial. Some accept the terms proposed: they believe the promises of God, and are saved.—Of the rest, some do not see how they can be saved in this manner; and others spend their lives in vanity, and never think whether they can or cannot. Men are influenced by two principles totally opposite, *sight* and *faith:* the Christian walks by *faith and not by sight;* the disputer of this world believes nothing but what he sees, and so is incapable of the benefits of Christianity. It does not appear to him how power can come from Heaven, and be delivered down in succession by the imposition of hands: how water which washes the body, can *wash away sins;* how bread can be made the vehicle of spiritual life; so he lives and dies the dupe of a dead philosophy, which admits of nothing spiritual in a religion whose benefits are all of a spiritual kind.

From the nature of the Church, we see how necessary it is, that men should be taken into it out of this wicked world. We see how the promises of God are confined to the ordinances of the Church; and that there can be no assurance of salvation without them. If we reflect on these things, we cannot but consider it as an inestimable blessing, that God hath appointed such a plain and certain way of leading us through the means of grace to the hope of glory. We may perhaps wonder *why* men should endeavour to deprive them-

selves of these benefits; and how Christian people, so called, can satisfy themselves under a causeless departure from the great law of peace and charity. I will therefore proceed to shew how they deceive themselves. There are three false principles, which, if admitted, would supersede the necessity of any Church.

The first of these is the doctrine of an absolute unconditional election to salvation. For if God, by a mere act of his sovereign will, and according to an irresistible decree, elects men to eternal salvation, without regard to conditions and circumstances; then no visible ordinances are necessary as means of grace; they are all superseded, and we are as safe without them as with them. This doctrine is so convenient to all the irregular classes of Christian people, who have cast off the Church and its authority, that it has been much insisted upon almost from the beginning of the Reformation; and has done infinite mischief. For he who is divided from his brethren, with this doctrine in his mind, is thereby confirmed and fortified in his errors. In vain shall we recommend the benefits of Church communion to him, who is saved in consequence of a decree, made before the Church or the world had a being. God hath elected him, without any regard to outward ordinances; and so the want of those ordinances can never render his election of no effect. And supposing his doctrine to be true, who can deny the consequence? But the doctrine is false. Thus much of it is true: that, according to the Scripture, man is chosen, or *elected out of the world*, by the free grace of God, without any respect to his own works, (of which he can have none till he is called; being in the state of an unborn infant) and brought into God's Church, where he is in a state of salvation. But he may fall from this state, or be cast out of it by

the authority which brought him into it, and forfeit all the privileges of his election; therefore the Apostle gives us this warning; *let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall:* and St. Peter bids us *give diligence to make our calling and election sure.* How can that be, if we are elected to salvation, by an irreversible decree? We need take no pains to make that sure, which in its nature is irreversible. Paul was a vessel *chosen of God;* and yet this same Paul supposes it possible for him to fall from the grace of God, and become a *castaway**. Election, therefore, as it is spoken of in the Scripture, hath been grossly misunderstood; for there is no such thing there as any election of individuals to final salvation, independent of the ordinances of the Church. Election is an inward and spiritual grace; but there is no such thing administered to man without some outward sign. A man might tell us that he is *ordained* to preach the Gospel: but we know this can never be without the *laying on of hands.* He may tell us he is one of God's elect; and if the reality of his election were to depend upon his own report, how should we confute him, although he were guilty of all manner of wickedness? If we believe him on his own authority, we may be tempted to be as wicked as he is; and multitudes have, by this doctrine, corrupted one another, and fallen into what is called

* Another proof of this argument may be found in 1 Cor. viii. 11. "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother *perish* for *whom Christ died?*" The true notion of predestination is to be met with in Eph. i. 11, 12. where those are said to be predestinated to the praise of God's glory who *trusted* in Christ. Our attainment of eternal happiness is the *consequence* of our belief in Christ, and the irreversible decree of God is, that those that believe in him should not perish, and this is probably the only sense in which the doctrine of predestination and election can be maintained from Scripture.

Antinomianism; a neglect of God's commandments, as not necessary to those who are elected independent of works and sacraments. To secure us from all such delusions, God hath affixed some outward sign or pledge to all his inward gifts, to assure us of their reality, and prevent imposture. Therefore, where there is an inward calling, there is an outward calling with it; where there is regeneration, there is the Sacrament of Baptism; and the Gospel knows of no regeneration without it. I might shew how this doctrine of absolute election is dishonourable to God, and contrary to his most express declarations. How it encourages some to presumption, pride, and ungodly living*; and how it drives others to despair and distraction †, who have not, nor can bring themselves to an assurance of their own personal election to the favour of God: but my business in this place is only to remark, how convenient this doctrine is to all those who do not come to God in the ordinary

* I remember a woman in a country parish, who used to boast much of her own *experiences*, and insult the people of the Church as reprobates; *goats* who were to be placed on the *left hand*, at the day of judgment; while she and her party were the true elect, the *sheep* who were to be placed on the right hand. Such was the usual strain of her conversation. But after a time, I heard that this *elect lady* was gone off with the husband of another woman. She was a severe critic on the Clergyman of the parish, as one who had many Popish actions, because he made a practice of turning to the East when he repeated the Creed; and though he was much attended to as a preacher, she said it all signified no more than the *barking of a dog*.

† When Dr. *Sparrow* was Bishop of Exeter, there rarely passed a day without a note or notes brought to Priest, Vicar, or Reader, for the prayers of the congregation, for persons *troubled in mind* or *possessed;* which as some judicious persons conjectured, was occasioned by the frequent preaching up of the rigid *Predestination* doctrines in some places in that city.

Preface to the *View of the Times.*

way of his institutions, nor can prove themselves to be members of his Church.

A second doctrine, on the ground of which men place themselves above the Church, is, that of immediate inspiration. For if men are now receiving new directions from Heaven, and God speaks in them as he did in Moses, and the Prophets, and the Apostles, they have no need to consult either the Scriptures or the Church : for they are independent of both, and have an higher rule. This is the reason why no impression can ever be made upon a Quaker, by arguments from the Scripture. He answers, that the Scriptures (as applied by us who do not understand them) cannot be brought in evidence against him ; because (to speak in the Quaker language) he has within himself the same Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures; and the Revelation which has past must give place to that which is present. Nothing blinds the eyes of men so effectually as pride : whence he who is vain enough to believe, that he is under the direction of immediate inspiration, must believe many other strange things. Such people therefore never fail to despise the ministry and worship of the Church, and make light of all its institutions. The Apostles of Jesus Christ foreseeing by a true revelation, that there would be false pretensions to inspiration in the Christian Church, as there were false prophets among the people of the Jews, give us warning not to *believe every spirit,* (that is, not to believe all those who pretend to speak by the Spirit) but to *try them* whether they speak by the spirit of *truth,* or the spirit of *error.* There are many good rules to direct us on this occasion : but there is one which every body can understand. The spirit of truth is the spirit of love, and peace, and unity : the spirit of error is the spirit of hatred, and contention,

and discord. The former tends to unite men into one body; the latter sets them at variance, and divides them into parties. *Beloved,* saith St. John, *let us love one another; for every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God.* When the great rule of Charity is broken, and men lay claim to the Spirit of God while they have no title to it, then they are open to the delusions of evil spirits: and accordingly many have uttered hideous blasphemies, under a persuasion that they are speaking by the Spirit of God. Some have proceeded so far as to personate God himself*. Certain it is, that the sect who have departed farthest from the Church and its ordinances, are the most forward in their pretensions to immediate inspiration; and even where this is pretended to in a lesser degree, a contempt for the Church and its ministry seldom or never fails to attend upon it in the same proportion †.

A third doctrine which makes the Church of no effect, is the sufficiency of moral virtue; and a perilous

* In the beginning of this century, there was a sect of *Camisar Quakers* in London, in whose assemblies persons of both sexes, particularly young girls, pretended to deliver prophecies, with strange screamings and distortions. One of these people, (horrible to relate) was seen to take another by the arm, and looking him broad in the face, said, *Do you not acknowledge me to be the eternal and unchangeable God?* To which the other, falling down and trembling, answered, *I do acknowledge thee,* &c. Many fine people from the court-end of the town, who would have paid but little respect to the benediction of a Bishop, were seen bending their knees, for a blessing, to these frantic females. See *View of the Times,* vol. iv. p. 235.

† The author of the *Snake in the Grass* prefixed a most excellent preface to that work, on the Enthusiasm of *Antonia Bourignon;* shewing the original and tendency of hers and every other delusion of the same kind; which preface the reader will do well to consult.

doctrine it is. It comes forward with a more sober face, but it hath less of the Gospel than of Enthusiasm or Predestination. For on this ground, a man need be of no Church, of no sect, nor even a Christian believer; because moral honesty, which forbears thieving and cheating, may be found in a Turk or an Heathen. When people would appear to be what they are not, and endeavour to supply their defects by fine words and plausible pretences, we call them hypocrites: and I will assure the reader, there is a great deal of cant in the world, beside that of fanaticism and affected devotion. Impiety can act the hypocrite upon occasion, and magnify moral virtue when it is set in opposition to the love of God. It is not unusual for persons to praise a man's character; not because they love his virtues, but because they hate his rival. So do some bad men praise morality, because they hate devotion. This is too frequently the case with those who make a false estimate of what they call a *good life;* leaving out the duties most essential to the life of a good Christian; and these are a very large party. Heresy and schism, till they turn into profligacy, never fail to descant upon the sufficiency of moral duties; and in this they are joined by the whole tribe of Deists, Infidels, and Moral Philosophers, who are glad to hear of a rule of morality, (such, by the way, as themselves are to define and determine) which will serve them as a substitute for the Christian life, and all the forms of Church devotion. Here also we find those Christians, who live in the habitual neglect of the means of grace. I have heard people who never were at the altar, and perhaps never intended it, comforting themselves with this consideration, that they never did any *harm* to any body: when they should rather have asked themselves, what *good* they ever did

to themselves, or to any body else, for the *love of God?* Without which all the virtues of man are nothing; and if he places any dependence upon them, they are worse than nothing. If a man is to be saved by the Christian religion, he must be a Christian in his life: but simple morality is not Christianity: it has neither *faith, hope, charity, prayer, fasting*, nor *alms*, which are the duties of the Christian life. If we mean to serve God, we must serve him in his Church, and conform to its ordinances. If we do good to our neighbours, we must do it on a principle of faith; and a cup of cold water given on this principle, is of more value in the sight of God, than all the treasures of the Indies, if they are distributed from the proud heart of unbelief: and he is certainly in unbelief, who doth not direct himself by the rules, and act upon the principles, which God hath delivered to the Church.

Nearly related to the sufficiency of moral virtue, is the principle of *sincerity*, which was set up in the last age, as sufficient of itself to justify man in the sight of God, independent of the authority and benefits of his Church: so that if a man be not a *hypocrite*, it matters not what religion he is of. If sincerity, as *such*, independent of any particular way of worship, can recommend man to the favour of God, then there can be no difference as to merit between a sincere martyr, and a sincere persecutor: and he that burns a Christian, if he be but in earnest, hath the same title to God's favour, as he that is burnt for believing in Jesus Christ. This position, (in the sense of it) absurd and monstrous as it must appear, was the support of a controversy in this kingdom, in which a Bishop led the way *, and was followed and applauded by all

* Thus did the famous Bishop Hoadley comfort all the Sectaries and Enthusiasts of his time; "When you are secure of your

the libertines and loose thinkers of the nation, who foresaw that the argument would end in the dissolution of the Church as a society: and therefore they made him a thousand compliments.

If we consider how the mind of man is influenced by custom and education, and that his conscience and self-approbation will be according to his principles; then we shall see that sincerity, if admitted, would sanctify all the wickedness under Heaven. St. Paul, as a zealous Jew, *verily thought* (that is, he was *sincerely* of *opinion)* that he *ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth;* so he persecuted the Christians furiously, and *breathed out threatenings and slaughter*. Now as he had a good meaning in all he did, to what end was he converted, when his sincerity would have saved him in his former way? After his mind was better enlightened, he pronounced himself to have been the *greatest of sinners,* for what he had done in the *sincerity of his heart.*

Thus it would be in all other cases; he that acts sincerely upon bad principles, must be a bad man; a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit; and, *not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* Upon the whole, he that will be saved, must be saved in the way which God hath ap-

integrity before God—this will lead you not to be afraid of the terrors of men, or the vain words of regular and uninterrupted succession, authoritative benedictions, excommunications—nullity or validity of ordinances to the people on account of niceties and trifles, or any other the like dreams." I can venture to say, there never was a cause more effectually battled and exposed upon earth, than this of Bishop Hoadley, against the Church, and Church Communion, in the Two *Letters* and the *Reply of Mr. William Law*, which every Clergyman of the Church of England ought to read, that he may know what ground he stands upon, and against what enemies he may be called forth to maintain it.

pointed, and not in any way of his own. We shall be judged at last according to God's word, not according to any persuasions we may have taken up, through the prejudices of education, or the perverseness of our own hearts ; all of which are indeed no better than dreams, having no foundation but on that loose bottom of human imagination, on which are built all the visions of the night, and all the heresies in the world.

If these doctrines of *absolute election*, immediate *inspiration*, the sufficiency of *moral virtue*, and justification from *sincerity*, were true ; it would follow, that God is unwise, inconsistent, and improvident. For if he appoints a visible Church and its ordinances, as necessary to make us members of the kingdom of Heaven ; and if he began the way of salvation by *adding to the Church such as were to be saved ;* and yet, with all this, has another *private* way of saving men, by a *secret decree* which has no regard to any outward means ; he is inconsistent in ordaining them. And also, as the doctrine of *immediate Inspiration*, or *new Revelation*, without any signs or credentials from Heaven, opens a way to every possible delusion of the mind, either from its own vain conceits, or the suggestions of evil spirits ; God must be improvident, in not securing us against such dangerous impositions, which may introduce all kinds of wickedness into the world, under the sanction of a divine authority : an impostor having nothing to do, but to persuade himself, as any madman may do, that he acts by immediate inspiration. With this persuasion, men have butchered one another to make bloody baptisms ; have set themselves up as kings and rulers of the new Jerusalem ; have taken plurality of wives, and blasphemously personated God himself*. All the disorders of

* See *Ross's* View of all Religions : particularly the account of the Anabaptists of Germany.

the last century were committed by fanatics, who assumed a privilege of seeking the Lord, and consulting, and receiving answers from him; while their minds were bent upon the most horrible crimes of rebellion, robbery, sacrilege, persecution, and murder.

Then as to *moral virtue,* if that can *save* those who are *not added to the Church,* it must follow, that man never was lost, and that Christ need not have come into the world. If *sincerity* in any persuasion, good or bad, will recommend us to the favour of God; then will lies, if we do but *believe* them, answer all the purposes of *truth:* then there is no difference between good and evil; and it cannot be worth while to convert Jews, Turks, or Heathens, to the Gospel, because they are as safe in their own way. Such are the pleas by which some men of necessity, and some of malignity, seek to justify themselves, when they leave the Church, or despise or neglect its ordinances. But *the foundation of God standeth sure.*

After what hath been said, few words will be wanting to convince any thinking person of the dangers and evil consequences which must attend the sin of causeless separation.

If men for salvation are brought out of the world into the Church, they cannot possibly forsake it, without hazard to their salvation.—If the promises of God, and the means of grace, are committed to the Church, we loose them when we leave the Church; at least it will be very hard to prove that we carry them away with us: and who would choose to be under any uncertainty in a case of such importance?

Another evil is that of breaking the great rule of charity in our worship. We are commanded to glorify God with *one mind and one mouth,* and all to *speak the same thing.* How contrary to this is the practice

of following different ways of worship, some totally disagreeing with others; and some not deserving the name of any worship at all; for in some of our assemblies people meet for no purpose but to hear one another talk. There is no praying, no confession of sins, no absolution, no thanksgiving, no Litany, no Sacraments! We read, that the Apostles, when the Holy Ghost descended, were *all with one accord in one place;* and so ought Christians to be, if they would preserve the presence of the Spirit amongst them, who is the spirit of unity. And as the spirit of unity in worship disposes men to a more peaceable and charitable temper; so the spirit of division and fanaticism is attended with violence and bitterness of language, and an intolerant persecuting humour toward all who are not fanatics; especially toward the members of the Church of England, which is deservedly placed at the head of the Protestant Reformation *.

* An author who put out a *Syllabus of Lectures*, in the year 1778, on the *Principles of Non-conformity*, speaks in the person of Jesus Christ, upon the tribunal of judgment at the last day, and supposes him presenting to the world, on that tremendous occasion, his *faithful servants*, the non-conformist ministers, as the great objects of his favour; and at the same time sending off those *holy tyrants*, the bishops of the Church of England, into everlasting fire, with that dreadful sentence—DEPART! And what are they to be damned for? Because they could not approve of *Non-conformity!* a religion of *negatives!* They saw enough of its fruits to dislike it in former times, from its first appearance in this kingdom; but they did not see, as we do now, that its end is *infidelity;* to which it hath been tending for many years past, and hath now attained it in the writings of Dr. *Priestley*, and the Unitarian Association. These Lectures, with this dreadful sentence of damnation to the bishops, by *Brother Robinson*, were approved by the *Easter Association of Essex, at Harlow*, and recommended to the *Sister Churches by order of all.* June 18, 1778. Of what character must these Sister Churches be, if they are of the same

There is also great hazard of losing the *doctrines* when we leave the *worship* of the Church. When the ten tribes revolted from the worship at Jerusalem,

spirit with *Brother Robinson?* Surely they are not *chaste virgins*, presentable to a meek and merciful Saviour, who prayed for his murderers; but unmerciful harlots, cursing and damning the established Church for retaining episcopacy. Had there been no nonconformity, the poor bishops might have escaped like other men, and have been entitled to their chance of mercy, through the merits of their Redeemer, who died for them, and for all men, and sent forth the first bishops by his own immediate authority. What would such Non-conformists do, if they had it in their power, who are provoked to such uncharitable ravings under the present most mild and moderate state of the Church of England?

But the most superlative instance of fanatic malignity I ever yet saw, is to be found in the works of Milton, whose malignity was rendered more malignant by the depressed and afflicted condition to which the Church was then reduced. He was a man of a bright and perfect imagination, and gifted with a wonderful choice of beautiful and descriptive expression. But the weapon is the worse for its sharpness, when malice hath the handling of it: and imagination is a mirror which can reflect the fires of hell as well as the lights of heaven; of which, I think, we have an example in the following invective against the bishops of the Church of England: "But they—that by the impairing and diminution of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule, and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life (which God grant them!) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell; where under the despiteful control, the trample and spurn of all the other damned, who, in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other ease than to exercise a raving and beastial tyranny over them, as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot, and down-trodden vassals of perdition." Conclusion of *Milton's Treatise on Reformation*, vol. i. p. 274. If it were put to my option, whether I would be an idiot, without a single faculty of mind, or a single sense of the body; or whether I would have *Milton's* imagination, attended with this fiery spirit of fanaticism; I should not hesitate one moment to determine.

they soon lost the truth of their law, and fell into an idolatrous worshipping of the calves they had set up in Dan and Bethel. Their government was troubled with great disorders, and their confusion ended in their utter dispersion. When men leave the worship of the Church, it is very natural for them to become disaffected to its doctrines; and they, who hate the Christian Faith, will take part with those who are against the Church; because they foresee, that if the Church be destroyed, the faith will be lost; as the light goes out when the lamp is broken. One of the most blasphemous books that ever was written in this country against the Christian *Faith*, was all of it apparently directed against the *Church:* on which consideration, many, who then believed the Christian doctrines, were drawn in by a disaffection to the Church, to take part with an infidel.

2. I am to remark farther, that with those who are ignorant and ill-instructed in the nature and use of the Church, there is a perverse prejudice in favour of *preaching;* and consequently a shocking neglect of those duties which belong to the people. It is a fine easy way for people with itching ears, to hear a preacher talk them into Heaven; while they neglect all the more essential parts of divine worship. Many hear a sermon with the same vain curiosity as people hear a speech upon a stage, and consult nothing but their own amusement. And while the whole of the ministerial duty is supposed to consist in preaching, a man who can bawl and rant is tempted to take himself for a minister of Jesus Christ, without any regular mission; of which sort we have multitudes in this kingdom at this time: and it is to be feared they are increasing. It is no uncommon thing for persons of all persuasions to meet in the same Church to hear the same preacher;

many of whom have no communion with one another at any time; how is a preacher to please such a mixt multitude of hearers, but by leaving the Church of Christ out of the question, and preaching a loose sort of Christianity, which will fit them all? Perhaps if he were to speak the plain truth, and, from a sincere regard to their souls, give them such information as they stand in need of, many of them would leave him with indignation: as there were those who would *walk no longer* with Jesus Christ, because they were not able to bear the things that were spoken by him. There is a fashion of inviting people to *come to Christ,* without telling them where and how he is to be found. Besides, it is a great mistake to suppose, that the whole of religion consists in our taking of Christ; it is beginning at the wrong end: for Christ is to take us, as he took the little children in his arms, and gave them his blessing*. He said to his disciples, *ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* There is a covenant between us and God, into which God, of his infinite grace, takes us; we do not take him, neither can we; and this confines us to the ordinances of the Church, which are not of us, but are the gifts of God's free grace to us miserable sinners: and Christians are united to God, and to one another, by the services of prayer, and the participation of the sacraments, more

* Mr. *Locke* in his *Reasonableness of Christianity* (a strange piece of divinity) is in the same mistake. He makes baptism a *visible act*, whereby those, who believed Christ to be the Messiah, *received him* as their King. So again, in the same style, he says, that by baptism men *enrol themselves* in the kingdom of Jesus; which is but to say in other words, that they *write their own names in* Heaven. From such language as this, it is too apparent, that Mr. *Locke's* ideas of the Christian Priesthood and sacraments were exceedingly low.

than by the hearing of the word of God without them; which many hear for reasons of vanity and uncharitableness. Who are the best friends every minister hath in his parish? They who attend the prayers and sacraments with him; who are edified by his *priesthood* as well as by his *preaching;* and are active in the great work of their own salvation.

3. As the latter times of the Jewish Church were very corrupt, and the doctrines of God were rendered of none effect by the inventions of men: it is agreeable to the prophecies of the New Testament, that *offences must come* amongst us; that men must arise, out of the Church, *speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them:* also that many will not *endure sound doctrine,* but *heap up to themselves* teachers (of their own appointing) *having itching ears.*

These and many other like passages give us notice, that there must be a falling off from the faith, with confusion and disagreement in the Christian society. If we look at our own Church, we have but a melancholy prospect; and cannot help observing, that it approaches too near to the state of the Jewish Church before its destruction. As they had corrupted the doctrines of Moses and the Prophets, and in consequence of it were divided into sects (for as truth unites, error always divides men) so have we corrupted the doctrines of the Gospel, and are miserably divided in consequence of it. I could name *some doctrines,* which if our Saviour were now to deliver in the metropolis of London, with the same freedom and authority as he did in Jerusalem, I verily believe he would be persecuted and put to death by people *called Christians,* as he was of old by those who were *called Jews.* The Church of Jerusalem was infested with temporising and philosophising Jews, who were farthest of all

others from the faith, while they affected to be wiser than all the rest of the people. The *Sadducees* believed neither Angel nor Spirit, and said there was no resurrection. The *Herodians* were politicians and men of the world, who flattered Herod that he was the Messiah. The *Pharisees* were a proud and sanctified sect, very godly in outward shew, but full of hypocrisy within. They justified themselves and despised others, as not good enough to stand near them, or belong to the same Church with them. Of the sect of the *Essenes* we have no particular account in the New Testament; but from all we can learn, I take them to have been the Quakers of that time, who had thrown off all external rites of worship, and affected a religion perfectly pure and philosophical. The Sadducees were the Socinians of Judaism; who had nothing spiritual belonging to them, and had reduced their law to an empty form. The venality and avarice of the Jews of our Saviour's time, was notorious, and provoked his indignation. Their temple, filled with buyers and sellers, was turned into a den of thieves: and, God knows, there is too much of a worldly traffic amongst us; which is too far gone to be reformed, and too bold to be censured—*venduntur omnia* * *!*

4. But whatever abuses there may be in the Church, it is our duty to make the best of it. The Church is our spiritual *mother:* and we may apply those words of the wise man, *despise not thy mother when she is old;* not even if she should be in rags and dotage. The

* " CHURCH LIVING.

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Perjury, which is now in a very growing state, may, in time, come to market with as much boldness as her sister *Simony* hath done for many years past.

doctrine of the Church of England is, by profession, still pure and apostolical; and, whatever faults it may have contracted, it cannot be worse than the Church which our Saviour found in Jerusalem; yet he still recommended to the congregation, the duty of obedience to their spiritual rulers. *The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* Bad as the Church then was, our Saviour never forsook it, but *taught daily in the Temple:* and his Apostles attended upon his worship at the hours of prayer; and probably continued so to do, till they were dispersed. Neither Christ nor his disciples ever considered the doctrines of Church-authority, and Succession, and Conformity, as *vain words* and *idle dreams*, as our Socinians have done of late years; and after what hath been said, their views want no explanation.

5. In our behaviour toward those who have departed from us, let us not, who honour the Church, fall into the error of those who despise it. Let us not betray any symptoms of pride in censuring with severity, but rather, with hearts full of sorrow and compassion, lament the differences and divisions which expose the Christian religion to the scorn of its enemies. Infidels are delighted to see that Christians cannot understand one another; for thence they are ready to report, that there is no sense amongst them all, nor any reason in their religion: for that, if there were, they would agree about it. In this also the Papists triumph; they boast of their advantage over the Reformed, in that they are preserved in peace and unity *, while we are torn to pieces with factions

* But see Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History; where he proves, by incontrovertable evidence, that the Romish Church has not always maintained her boasted unanimity.

and divisions. Hence they reflect upon the whole Reformation, as a natural source of confusion; that they belong to *Jerusalem,* and we to *Babel:* that when we leave their Church, the city upon the hill, we never know where to stop, till we get to the bottom; that is, till we have run either into the madness of enthusiasm, or the profaneness of infidelity. How shall we stop this wide mouth of scandal, while appearances are so much against us? However, this reproach doth not reach us of the Church of England; who, in doctrine and profession are where we were two hundred years ago. Let those who have left us try if they can answer the Papists upon this head; it is their business to account for the confusion which they only have introduced *.

If the Clergy of this Church have any desire to preserve it, they must consider for what end the Church is appointed. A Christian Church is a candlestick, to hold forth the Light of the Gospel. When it ceases to answer that end, it is of no use as a Church; and the world may do as well without it. Great things have been attributed of late times to moral preaching; but there is no such thing as telling people what they are to *do,* without telling them what they are to *believe;* because the *Christian morality* is built upon the *Christian faith,* and is totally different from the morality of Heathens. *Deism,* so called, is a *Religion without Christianity;* it has neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, into whose name Christians

* It is too much the fashion of the times to divide the Christian Religion only into two classes, one including the Papists, and the other comprehending the motly herd who are disunited from the Church of Rome, and who are all distinguished by the general name of Protestants.—Whereas the Sectarians are many of them as widely removed from us of the Church of England, as we are from the Papists.

are baptized. It has no Sacraments, no Redemption, no Atonement, no Church Communion, and consequently no Charity; for Charity is the love and unity of Christians as such. *Natural Religion* is but another name for *Deism;* it is the same in all respects; and I may challenge all the philosophers in Europe to shew the difference. Therefore to recommend moral duties on the ground of natural religion, is to preach Deism from a pulpit; and we should ask ourselves, whether God, who upholds his Church, to declare salvation by Jesus Christ alone, will preserve a Church, when it has left the Gospel, and holds forth the light of Deism in the candlestick which was made, and is supported in the world, only to hold forth the light of Christianity? What else is it that hath made way for the enthusiastic rant of the Tabernacle? When the wise forsake the Gospel, then is the time for the unwise to take it up; but with such a mixture of error and indiscretion, as gives the world a pretence for never returning to it any more; and then the case is desperate.

'*Deism*, properly so called,' (said a certain writer) 'is the *religion essential to man*, the true *original religion of reason and nature*. It is in Deism, properly so called, that our more discerning and rational *divines* have constantly placed the *alone excellency* and true glory of the *Christian* institution.—*The Gospel*, (says Dr. Sherlock) *was a republication of the Law of Nature, and its precepts declarative of that original religion, which was as old as the creation.—If natural religion* (says Mr. Chandler) *be not a part of the religion of Christ, 'tis scarce worth while to enquire at all, what his religion is:* from whence it seems very natural to infer, that the *other parts of the religion of Christ are scarce worth any thing at all*

' of our notice.' [*Deism fairly stated by a moral Philosopher:* pp. 5, 6, 7.] See the whole book, which proceeds on this principle: that natural religion being admitted, it must be a perfect scheme, a complete structure; and that Christianity, as a superstructure, is unnecessary; and it is lamentable to see what advantage this author takes of the unguarded concessions of some celebrated Christian preachers and controversialists of the Church of England, who did not foresee, or did not consider, the consequences of their doctrines.

Dr. *Taylor*, some time since a dissenting teacher at *Norwich*, a man of considerable learning, was the author of certain Theological Lectures, which I have reason to think have met with a more favourable reception than they deserved among some of the Clergy of our own Church, and have been even recommended as elementary tracts to young Students in Divinity. In the first chapter of these Lectures, I find a rule of interpretation repugnant to the rule given us by the Scripture itself, which directs us to *compare spiritual things with spiritual*, that is, to compare the Scripture with the Scripture, that we may keep to the true sense of it. But here it is laid down as a fundamental rule, that we should always interpret the Scripture, in a sense *consistent with the laws of natural religion;* for that the *law of nature, as it is founded in the unchangeable nature of things, must be the basis and ground-work of every constitution of religion which God hath erected.* This rule of Dr. *Taylor* prejudges the Scripture before we come to it, and inculcates into inexperienced Students of Divinity the very principle that hath ruined us, and given us up as a prey to the Deists; it allows them the advantage they have contended for against the peculiar doctrines of Revelation,

as *scarce worth any thing at all of our notice, in comparison of natural religion.* For here, I say, before we descend to the Scripture, we are possessed of a system, founded in the unchangeable nature of things; from which, whatsoever the Bible may seem to reveal, we are never to depart. Let us then suppose, that our Christian baptism teaches us to believe in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: what have we to do? Natural Religion hath already determined, from *the unchangeable nature of things,* that God is but *one person* *. Therefore we must *interpret* the form of Baptism to *such a sense,* as will still leave this doctrine of *nature* in possession; either by teaching that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are, in reality, but *one person;* or that Jesus Christ is no person in the Godhead, but a *mere man, like ourselves;* or, that Christianity is not true, &c. So in like manner, by another anticipation, natural religion makes every man his own Priest and his own Temple: therefore it cannot possibly admit the true and proper Priesthood of Jesus Christ; but must reject the whole doctrine of atonement, and the corruption of man's nature; for this is incompatible with the idea of a natural religion; inasmuch as corrupt nature must produce a corrupt religion. If we say that nature is not corrupt, we overturn the foundations of the Gospel; which teaches us, that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them.*—Man, it seems, is so far from *knowing* the spiritual things revealed to him in the Scripture, that, as he now is *by nature,* he is not in a condition to *receive* them (they will be *foolishness* to him) till he is enabled so to

* "This (says Dr. Clarke) is the *first principle of Natural Religion.*" See Mr. Jones's *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity;* p. 15, of the sixth Edition; where this is considered more at large.

do by a new faculty of *discernment*, which is supernatural and *spiritual*. It is therefore easy to foresee what must be the consequence, when Dr. *Taylor's* rule is admitted; and the younger Clergy of this Church take him for their guide. They will take the doctrines of nature, and work them up with the doctrines of the Scripture; that is, they will throw natural Religion into the Scripture, as Aaron threw the gold of Egypt into the fire: and, what will *come out?* Not the Christian Religion, but the philosophical *calf* of *Socinus*.

Mr. *Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity* may be read with safety, by those who are already well learned in the Scripture: but what a perilous situation must that poor young man be in, who, perhaps, when he can but just construe the Greek Testament, or before, is turned over to be handled and tutored by this renowned veteran; who, with a shew of *reasonableness*, and some occasional sneers at orthodoxy, and affecting the piety and power of inspiration itself, has partly overlooked, and partly explained away, the first and greatest principles of Christianity, and reduced it to a single proposition, consistent with Hercsy, Schism, Arianism, Socinianism, and Quakerism.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE ABUSE OF THE REFORMATION, &c.

To the *doctrines* which are pleaded in defence of separation, I might have added the use which has been made of the *historical event* of our Reformation from the errors of the Church of Rome. Here the Dissenters are in confederacy with the Papists against us. The Papists object, that by the *fact* of our separation from their Church, the *principle* of separation is admitted; and being once admitted, it will multiply sects and divisions amongst us, and justify them all, as much as it justifies us. This is the very argument, which the Dissenters have repeated an hundred times; and they borrowed it originally from Rome, whose emissaries were detected among the Puritans in the days of Elizabeth, feeding them with reasons and objections for the multiplying of schism, and the weakening of the Episcopal Church of England: and, God knows, they succeeded but too well. However, the link which unites these two parties may easily be broken. They both agree, that the Reformation of the Church of England was a *separation* from the Church of Rome,

of the same kind, and on the same principles, with the separation of our Dissenters. But to say this, is to assert, that the Pope had a *legal* authority over the Church of England; when in fact it was an usurped authority; and the Church of England reformed itself, as a national Episcopal Church, on the ground of its original independence on the See of Rome. Therefore, till our Sectaries have given up this point to the Papists, and made the Church of England legally dependent on the authority of Rome, the case of our Reformation affords no precedent to their separation. This Bishop *Hoadley* knew; therefore he allowed the authority of the Church of Rome, and made the Reformation of this Church a forcible separation, or schism, that all the Sectaries might be justified by our example. But he goes to a greater length: he maintains, that we did not reform, because the doctrines of the Church of Rome *were actually corrupt,* but because we *thought them so;* putting our Reformation on the foot of *opinion,* not of reasonable right, and actual knowledge: and opinion being once admitted as a rule of Reformation, will hold as good against us, as against the Papists: nay, it will stop no where, till it makes every man a Church to himself; with such doctrines as he likes, and without any one Christian ordinance whatsoever. When we descend to reason and authority, a weak cause may soon be overthrown; but if *opinion* is to justify, the Quakers may stand their ground; and so may Socinians, Mahometans, Jews, and Heathens; because the opinions of men, from the force of custom and habit, will go with the persuasion in which they have been educated. The Papists wish to put all Reformation from their Church, on such a foot, that the principle may be ruined by its own absurdity: and in this our Secta-

ries, with Bishop *Hoadley* for their advocate, have given them all the advantage they can desire.

Popular power is another engine which hath been turned against the Church; that is, against the authority of God and his ministers; and if this is admitted, then must that be right which the people set up, whatever it may be. All unlawful authority affects to ride in upon the backs of the people: and the patriots of Pagan Rome, while they trampled upon captive kings, and looked upon all nations as made to be their slaves, were always flattering the *people* of their own commonwealth, with the conceit of their own *majesty*. The *Geneva* discipline went upon this principle; and they were followed therein by our Puritans and Independents. But the Scripture is so expressly against it, that its friends were tempted to corrupt the text of the New Testament, to give it countenance. In the History of the Ordaining of the seven Deacons, in the sixth chapter of the Acts, the text says—*whom WE may appoint over this business*—giving the appointment to the *Apostles*. But the words were altered into—*whom YE may appoint*—giving the appointment to the *people*. One of the largest and the most numerous folio editions of the Bible ever printed in this country, which is that of *Field*, 1660, several copies of which are still to be seen, upon the reading-desks in our Churches, has this corruption; as many others had from the years 1640 to 1660. *Field's* edition was worked off in the time of the Usurpation, and was to have been published under the authority of the Parliament; but not coming forth till after the Restoration, the title-page was changed, and it made its appearance *cum Privilegio*.

From this falsification of the Apostolical History,

it is easy to foresee (and every young reader should be aware of it) how the English History, particularly that of the last century, must have suffered under the hands of the same party; what falsities and forgeries must have been propagated, to conceal the truth, to defame and blacken the best characters, and to justify the worst. Sometimes these bold experiments brought the authors of them into great embarrassment. Mr. *Baxter*, in two of his editions of his *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, printed before the year 1660, instead of the *Kingdom of Heaven*, as it is in the Scripture, calls it the *Parliament of Heaven*, (and, if like their own, it must have been a parliament *without a King*), and into this Parliament he puts some of the *regicides*, and other like *saints*, who were then dead. But in the editions after the Restoration, he drops them all out of Heaven again, and restores the Kingdom of God to its place, in the language of the Gospel. Lord *Brook* was one of the saints whom *Baxter* thus discanonized; of whose remarkable end Lord *Clarendon* gives an account; vol. II. chap. vi. p. 114.

But to return to the subject of popular Election. I have an author before me, a declaimer against *Priestcraft*, who finds the right of the people in the History of the Election of *Matthias* to the Apostleship. "Matthias is elected," says he, "*to testify that ordination might be valid by the votes of the people only, without the immediate interposition of Heaven.*" He calls the Assembly of Apostles and Disciples, who were an hundred and twenty in number, *the people*; of whom we know that *eleven* were Apostles: that *seventy* more were ordained ministers; and nothing appears, but that (the *women* excepted) all the rest of this assembly were of the ministry likewise. But

supposing them to be *the people*, how does it appear, that ordination was valid by their *votes?* Where is the account of this voting? The election is referred to God in the determination of a lot. *Thou, Lord, shew whither of these two* thou *hast chosen.* Here the immediate interposition of Heaven is applied for; but our orator says, this ordination was from the votes of the people only, without any such interposition of Heaven *. These two examples may be sufficient to shew the wretched shifts, and bold experiments, to which men are driven in the handling of the Scripture, to uphold the Antichristian doctrine of a Church derived from the authority of the people.

* See *the Axe laid to the Root of Priestcraft, in four Discourses.* Disc. iv. p. 5.

A

SHORT VIEW

OF THE

PRESENT STATE OF THE ARGUMENT

BETWEEN THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

AND THE

DISSENTERS.

A

SHORT VIEW,

&c.

THE excellent *Hooker,* in the Preface to his *Ecclesiastical Polity,* gives us a curious and clear account of the zeal and artifice with which the first Puritans maintained and recommended their schism against the Church of England.—But every member of this Church should see, within as short a compass as may be, how the same cause (allowing for the difference of times and fashions) is maintained now.

A worthy Divine distinguished himself some thirty years ago, in *Three Letters to a Gentleman dissenting from the Church of England;* which Letters were much attended to at the time, and procured the author the notice and encouragement of Archbishop *Secker.* He afterwards reduced the substance of them into a small manual, addressed to a *dissenting parishioner,* with the pious desire of *guiding him to the Church of England:* and an excellent little piece it is. But as the zeal of our Dissenters permits nothing of this kind to pass, without the appearance of an answer, it is probable they set one of their best hands upon the work

of writing a short *reply* to it; that the dissenting parishioner might *not* be guided to the Church of England. This *reply*, which was printed at *Birmingham*, (that modern mint of base money, and false doctrine) I have, with some difficulty, procured; and I shall produce, in their order, such arguments as I have found in it; from which it will be seen, how the Dissenters of the present age defend their separation.

1. They make very light of the sin of *schism*, as a thing which has nothing frightful to *wise* people; although it be dressed up by us in a frightful form, to terrify the *ignorant*, and such as are *children in understanding*.

Such is the *schism*, when it is committed against *us;* but when it comes home to *themselves*, they have entertained a very different opinion of it, and have carried the principle of unity as high as the most zealous of the Church of England. Liberty of conscience, when it operated against themselves, was called, *cursed Toleration*, that *hideous monster of Toleration*, in a book subscribed by the ministers of the province of London, Dec. 14, 1647*. We are then agreed, that schism must be of pernicious consequence, and that it is a grievous affliction to the Christian society; though we are not rightly agreed as to the objects of schism. If considered in itself, it is the opposite to St. Paul's virtue of *charity;* as any intelligent person

* See a friendly debate between a Conformist and a Non-conformist. Edit. 3, p. 76. That the Dissenters are, to this day, of the same *intolerant spirit*, is not to be doubted; and I have had repeated demonstrations of it under my own eye, who have seen a small minority of dissenters, though unprovoked, stir up such a furious opposition against a Church, and its minister, that a good man, of a peaceable temper, made this reflection upon it to his clergyman :—" Sir, I perceive we should not have so much as a barn to worship God in, if they could prevent it."

may see, who reads the 13th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians as a continuation of the 12th chapter. And if charity is the greatest of all virtues, its contrary, which is schism, must be the greatest of all sins; therefore we justly pray against it in the Litany. Whether the Dissenters ever follow our example, is more than I know; though it can scarcely be expected that they should pray against, while they continue in it, and think it hath nothing frightful to *wise* people. But if we may judge of it by its fruits (and there is no better rule), what envy and hatred, what disputings and railings, what cruelty and persecution, what rebellion and sacrilege, hath it not produced in this kingdom? and they who acted these things were so far from taking shame to themselves, that they laid all the guilt of them upon the Church, which they persecuted and plundered! We should be glad to forget these things, but that there are some amongst us who delight in the memory of those unhappy times, and chew all the murder and the mischief of them over again, which is the case with the author of the *Confessional,* and other writers of the same spirit. As to the corruption of doctrine, which follows upon schism, it was so apparent to the actors in the schism of the last century, that it forced from them that testimony above mentioned, against the *cursed* nature of *Toleration.* Threescore different sects, some holding monstrous and blasphemous opinions, rose out of the Presbyterians of that time. Now, to make light of all these things, as if schism, which is a root of bitterness, *i. e.* an active principle of mischief in the mind, were but a slight offence, a mere scarecrow to *wise* people, is to deceive men, and bring their consciences and souls into a fatal snare. Nay, it is not only to de-

ceive them, simply, but with the very deception which brought death into the world. The tempter suggested to our first parents, that they *should not surely die;* and that their apprehensions of danger arose from the *ignorance* and *childishness* of their *understandings.*

2. They plead next, that their schism, with respect to the Church of England, is no more than a separation from an *human establishment;* for that the Church of England has *no foundation* but upon *the King and the Parliament;* whereas the Church of Christ is *founded upon the doctrines* taught by the Apostles.

If our Church has *no foundation but upon the King and Parliament,* then certainly it is not founded upon the authority of Christ, and, consequently, it is no Church of Christ. But will any man say, that a national Church, being a member of the Catholic Church of Christ, ceases to be such, when adopted as a part of the constitution, and established by the civil power? Suppose it were persecuted by the civil power; and its ministers and worship were proscribed: would it therefore cease to be a Church of Christ? Certainly not: for the Church of the Hebrews in Egypt was still the Church of God, though the people were under a cruel edict not to serve him, and God owned it as such, and delivered it at last. Do the powers of this world unmake the Church by their reception of it, when they do not by their persecuting of it? Do its bishops and priests cease to be bishops and priests? Do its sacraments cease to be sacraments? Doth its discipline cease to be Christian discipline, and love its authority, because the state admits of it, and establishes it? I say, suppose they were to declare against all these things, as the Heathens and Jews did in the first ages of the Gospel, their

declaration would signify nothing: because the Church, in its priesthood and sacraments, derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of the civil powers cannot reach; much less can their allowance turn it into an *human* authority, and render it of none effect. But we shall see hereafter, how all this is overthrown, by another plea which the Dissenters (forgetting *this*) have made use of to defend their separation from the Church of England.

To say, that the Church of Christ is founded upon the *doctrines* taught by the Apostles, is a gross mistake. *Doctrines* can no more confer authority of office to Church ministers, than a statute book in England can make a justice of the peace; whose power must come to him by personal deputation. A written law does nothing, till there comes an executive power, lawfully ordained, to administer and bring it to effect. Let any Dissenter shew us the text or doctrine that will make a priest. We can soon shew him one which tells us how priests must be made.—*No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;* who was called by an outward consecration from a person whom God had commissioned to consecrate: and the power thus given descended by succession to his posterity. The power of *absolution* was given by Christ to the Christian ministry, and without this power there can be no such thing as a Church of Christ. The priesthood had the power of absolution under the law of Moses; and even the priests of heathenism were never considered as the representatives of the people, but of the God to whom they belonged; to pronounce blessings and forgive sins in his name. But the Presbyterians are so far from claiming this power to themselves (though supposed to be in all the priests of the world), that they

mock at it in us, and call it popery and juggling; and a Church so rejecting a power essential to the nature of priesthood, is in a state of abjuration against its own existence.

3. They say, the Church of England hath imposed such articles of faith, as the Gospel hath not imposed; for which imposition Christ hath given no authority.

This objection extends to every Church upon earth, that requires any articles of faith as terms of Church communion; and it proves too much if it proves any thing. The Gospel, it is true, imposes nothing but *baptism*, and its *faith* in *the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:* all other articles are intended for the defence and security of this one in its proper extent. And such articles will be more or less, according to times and occasions, as the adversaries of the faith assault it on different sides, and with different principles of offence. The Gospel does not require that we should renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil: nor set down the Apostles' Creed, as a condition of communion: and, if we had a mind to be perverse and captious, we might argue, that a man may come to a Christian baptism with his mouth shut, and not say one word for himself, because the Gospel hath not set down the form, nor specified the terms of the baptismal covenant; though the intention or sense of it (what we are to renounce, and what we are to belive) is clear throughout the New Testament. The Church of England hath articles expressly against Popery: but the Gospel hath imposed no such articles; it knew nothing of Popery; and the principle of the Dissenters would leave us defenceless against the Papists, as well as all our other enemies, and is contrary to the fundamental principle of all society, and even of nature itself. We have no occasion here to

enquire what the articles of the Church of England are; because the objection extends to all articles whatsoever, except such as are set down in the Scripture, which sets down nothing but baptism; and is so brief in its accounts, that every true principle of the Christian faith might be evaded, if we were to lay hold of some short expressions, and make them *exclusive*, contrary to common rules of reasoning, the plainest facts, and the nature of the case, as some have done; particularly the celebrated Mr. *Locke*, who contends, that the Christian Gospel has but one article, namely, *that Jesus Christ is the Messiah;* whereas the one great condition of salvation, in the Gospel, is baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; therefore the great fundamental article of the Gospel, is that of faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

4. From the preceding article, which asserts that the Church of England hath imposed articles which Christ hath not imposed; it is argued, that in opposing the Church of England, they oppose *an invasion of the kingly authority of Jesus Christ.*

Jesus Christ doth not act in person, but hath commissioned his Church to act for him, and hath promised to be with it, and support its authority, to the end of the world. Therefore, to argue *for* Jesus Christ *against* his Church, is to set up Jesus Christ against himself; and the like objection may be made against all the Churches in the world: which, so far as they act for their own just rights, *under* Jesus Christ, may be said to act *against* him. Every true Church is bound to assert and defend the faith it hath received: but its enemies will call this necessary defence an *imposition*, and then contend, that they are free from all obligation. But with what grace doth this argument

come from the party, who imposed their own *solemn league and covenant* on men's consciences in this kingdom, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, and proscribed them as *malignants* if they refused to take it; for which there certainly is neither precedent nor precept in the Gospel? How marvellously do the opinions of men change, when they argue *for themselves*, and when they argue *against us!*

5. To explain away the offence of schism, it is farther argued, that as there were *schisms* among the *Corinthians*, when it does not appear that there was any *separation;* so there may be a separation where there is no schism: because Christians may still be *united in heart and affection*, though they perform the offices of religion in different places and in different ways.

The history of facts in this country gives us a different prospect of things, and indeed it is preposterous to suppose, that if we sow in schism, we shall reap in unity; or, in other words, that if we murder and mangle the body of the Church, we shall preserve charity, which is the life and soul of it. It is true, we shall not dispute much about any thing, if we are indifferent to every thing: but misguided religious zeal is not of this insipid character. The ordinance of Parliament of the 11th of August, 1645, *for putting in execution the Directory*, has these words:—" If any person or persons whatsoever shall, at any time or times hereafter, use, or cause the aforesaid book of Common Prayer to be used in any church, chapel, or public place of worship, or in any private place, or family, within the kingdom of England, or the dominion of Wales, or port and town of Berwick; every person so offending herein, shall, for the first offence, pay the sum of five pounds of lawful English money: for the second of-

fence, ten pounds; and for the third, shall suffer one whole year's imprisonment, without bail or mainprize." This law was one of the fruits of schism; and there never was a law more severe and cruel. The king was then living, and the *private* worship of his family is not excepted. But these were days of religious madness; we know better now. So it is said; but I fear with very little truth. What would not that persecuting spirit do, if it had power, which is so conspicuous in the *Syllabus* of Mr. *Robinson's* Lectures, a *dissenting teacher* at *Cambridge?* How fresh is the remembrance (or ought to be) of the riots in London, which shook the kingdom, and brought us so nearly to ruin in a few days; all conducted by a fanatic Presbyterian, with a rout of forty thousand disorderly people at his heels? And if the principles of fanaticism can perform such wonders here, even in a man without learning, without parts, without morals, without sense; how dreadful may their effects be upon a future occasion! and who can tell how *soon* that occasion may happen? especially as Dr. *Priestley*, another *dissenting teacher*, is now threatening us with impending ruin, from himself and his party; who give us warning, that they have long been, and are now, *conveying gunpowder* under our *foundation*, to blow up the *old rotten fabric* of the Church of England? Neither is that zeal totally departed which produced the cruel edict of 1645, against the use of our Liturgy; a Dissenter (to my knowledge) having been lately heard to declare, that every Common Prayer Book in England *ought to be burned!* and this was from a person, who, abstracted from these paroxysms of religious bigotry, was of a peaceable and quiet temper! Add to this, that practice, which is almost universal with the Dissenters, of *forcing* their servants and dependants into the *worship*

of the Meeting-house, however strong their affections may be to the worship of the Church by birth and education. But our dissenting apologist assures us, Christians may still be *united in heart and affection,* though they worship God in different places: and that there may be separation without schism, as there was schism at Corinth without separation. But these smaller schisms of the Corinthians, which did not actually separate them into different communions, were yet, according to the Apostle, very reprehensible, and of bad tendency; therefore, actual separation, being schism in the extreme, must be more reprehensible. To suppose it less, is to contradict the reason of things; as if it should be argued, that, because we may hurt a man without killing him, therefore we may kill a man without hurting him.

6. However, if there should be any schism betwixt the Church of England and the Dissenters, they say the *guilt* of it is with the Church, who will not *yield to weak brethren in things which are confessed to be indifferent and of small moment.*

With what propriety can things of *small moment* be introduced, as objections to our communion, after it has been asserted, that the Church of England is *no Church of Christ?* If that objection be good, all things of *small moment* are superfluous. For who can be obliged, or who indeed will consent, to be a member of a Church, which is no Church of Christ; "Leave things indifferent (saith this reply) as they are in their own nature, and as Christ hath left them, and the separation is over." So then, if these indifferent things were removed, the Dissenters would communicate with a Church, which is no Church of Christ! Who can believe this? Is it not much more probable that the Dissenters do not mean to throw up the se-

paration for any concessions that can be made by a Church, which, in their opinion, is itself separated from the Communion of Jesus Christ? These objections are so inconsistent, that they leave small hopes of the possibility of a reconciliation. For if all these small things were removed, still there will remain the insuperable (and we trust, uncharitable and groundless) objection, that the Church of England is no Church of Christ; and that Dissenters cannot upon any principle communicate with a Church, which they think to be excommunicate. The case between us is very bad under this representation of it; but it becomes, if possible, more hopeless in what follows.

7. For the reply tells us, that the Dissenters do not stand out for the *value* of the things required, which are matters of *indifference;* but stand up in defence of that *liberty,* wherewith Christ hath made them free, and will not be brought into bondage.

Do they think then, that Christ hath given them *liberty* to break the peace of the Church, for matters *indifferent?* That is, to destroy peace, essential to salvation; to save liberty, the creature of human pride? Another apologist of the Dissenters, the author of *The Independent Whig,* puts this matter out of question: and affirms without reserve, that *schism* is so necessary to the preservation of *liberty,* that there can be *no liberty without schism.* What would the Christian world be, if this principle were universally followed? No two of us could consent together; because the one must lose his *liberty,* till he goes off into *schism;* so it would break all Christian societies into individuals. *Liberty* and *bondage* are words of strange significations in this land, which it would be tedious to display. Only let us distinguish, that there is no bondage in dutiful submission; for that is the *service of*

God which is *perfect freedom:* nor any liberty in unreasonable disobedience; for that is the bondage of Satan, who works in the children of disobedience, and puts them to a great deal of trouble; making them restless and impatient, and leading them such a wearisome life, that if it were not called liberty, they would wish themselves out of the world.

8. The Church of England is accused of taking away the Bread and the Cup, unless people will receive kneeling; and Christ hath not made kneeling a necessary term of communion.

Nor is it necessary with us; because we administer the Sacrament to the sick or the infirm, either sitting, kneeling, or lying. Kneeling is proper to an act of devotion; such the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is now, and not a social act of eating, as at the Passover, when it was first instituted. Kneeling may admit of a bad construction, because the Papists kneel and worship the Host: but charity will give it a good construction, and then all the difficulty is over. However, let us call it an *imposition:* yet why should the enjoying of it be objected to by the very people, who imposed on all that took their solemn league and covenant the posture of *standing*, with the ceremony of *lifting up the right hand bare?* But, what is still more to the purpose, one of their apologists assures us, they make no scruple of giving their Sacrament to all those who choose to kneel in a Meeting-house *. Therefore it is not the *thing*, (though that is sometimes highly exclaimed against) but the *enjoining* of the thing, that

* "In some of our Churches, there are some who receive *standing*, some *kneeling*. Nor is there, I believe, amongst our ministers, one in five hundred, who would refuse to give the Sacrament either standing or kneeling, to any one who thought either of these the fittest posture of receiving." *Dissenting* Gentleman's *Answer* to the Rev. Mr. White's Three Letters. P. 21.

renders it offensive; and it appears from this case, that Dissenters will do that to please themselves which they will not do to please God; who hath enjoined us all to be at peace with one another, and to agree in his worship.

Sponsors in baptism, and the signature of the Cross, are objected to. But the first is only a prudent provision, as a farther security for the child, if the parents should die, or be of such characters as renders them unfit for sponsors; which the child cannot help. The signature of the Cross can give no offence (as one should think) to any person who delights in the memory of the Cross itself. The purest ages of the Church used it on all occasions, particularly in exorcisms, which were anciently a part of baptism, and there are some pretty clear intimations in the Scripture for the use of some signature on the forehead: and the first of all signatures is that of the Cross. For motives of worldly traffic, the Dutch, instead of preferring it to a place in their foreheads, trample it under their feet: and our Dissenters reject it from an affection to their schism. If the Papists are superabundant and superstitious in the use of the Cross, what is that to us? If they repeat the Lord's Prayer twenty times in an hour, are we not to repeat it at all *.

9. It is farther objected to our Church, that the people have a right, an *unalienable* right, to choose their own ministers; which with us they are not permitted to do.

As for the patriotic term *unalienable*, it is applied to the rights of *nature*, which are *unalienable* because

* See the use of the Signature of the Cross in Baptism, fully and learnedly vindicated in *Bennet's* Abridgment of the *London Cases*, chap. vi.

they are *inherent.* But here it can only mean, that the Dissenters claim it, and are resolved not to part with it. On this part of the subject, I must lament, with tears in my eyes, the great abuses in the Church of England, in respect to patronage and admission into Church-livings. But in bad times, no regulations are sufficient to secure us from corruption; and even the very means appointed to *keep out* bad men, will *let them in:* for there are times, when persons of no conscience or character may act *with impunity;* and the worst of men are the most ready to play with all religious securities. That this case would be mended if the choice of ministers were always with the people, is by no means clear. For nothing is so common as for people to be divided in interests and affections on very unworthy motives; and thence many great and scandalous disturbances arise; and a parish is so divided into parties, that perhaps they do not come into humour again for some years. Besides, suppose a *Socinian* should have got possession of a pulpit, and preached the people (or a *few* of the most *active, noisy,* and *cunning,* who overbear all the rest) into heresy: whom would they choose, but a Socinian, at the next vacancy? And would it not be much better that an Orthodox minister should be put upon them? If the people have this right, then all the people have it; and, consequently, a Socinian congregation have a right to choose a Socinian minister. How the Scripture hath been handled, as to this affair of popular election, was noted in the Postscript to the *Essay on the Church.*

10. Though the Dissenters have no ministry by *Succession,* they make light of this defect, and think they are as well off as we are, because they say, our *right*

of ordaining came down to us through the channel of Popery.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in a Church, were no invention of Popery, nor is our succession any more affected by Popery, than the Apostles' Creed, which is also *come down to us through the channel of Popery;* and so is the *Canon of the Scripture* itself: yet we take the old Creed and the old Scriptures, and think them as good as ever. The Church of Rome is under such an opprobrium with Protestants, that it is a convenient bugbear, brought forward upon all occasions by those who want better argument, to frighten us out of our Church principles, and cover the weakness of their own innovations. But the succession of Church offices is no more affected by the errors of Popery, than a man's pedigree is affected by his bodily distemper, or the distempers of his parents; and if the man, by alteratives and restoratives, is cured with the blessing of God, he returns to the state of his purer ancestors of a remote generation. A self-originated upstart, who has been railing at him for things past, in which he had no share, may take his name, and claim his inheritance; but when his title comes to be examined, the true right will appear, and justice will take place.

If we trace the pedigree of the Church of England far enough backwards, we find a Christian Church of the Episcopal form in Britain, with an independent right and authority of its own, before *Austin* set his foot in the country, as messenger of *Rome*. At the Reformation, this Church did but return to its original rights, with an Episcopacy independent of the Pope, and enjoyed it for some years, with the general approbation of the people, and there was no such thing as a Presbyterian in the nation. It was approved

and congratulated for its felicity by the reformed of other countries: and even *Calvin* and *Beza* then little thought that they should have any followers so *mad*, (I use their own word) as to reject such an Episcopacy as ours, which had freed itself from the usurpation of the Papacy. Calvin, in his Epistle to Cardinal *Sadolet*, said of those who should reject such an hierarchy, that he should think them, *nullo non anathemate dignos*, i. e. "that no curse could be too bad for them." *Beza* would not believe that any could reject the order of Bishops in a reformed Church. *If there be such*, said he, *God forbid that any man in his wits should assent to the madness of those men* *. And in the same book †, speaking of the hierarchy of England and her Bishops, he says, *Let her enjoy that singular blessing of God, which I wish may be perpetual to her.* Such at that time were the sentiments of *Beza* and *Calvin*: who afterwards found it convenient to change their style; and, when the war was carried on against Episcopacy itself, the expurgatorial authority of their editors in later editions expunged these charitable attestations out of their works: which hath a very guilty appearance.

11. The Dissenters plead, that what is called the Act of Toleration, has given a sanction to their separation, and taken away the sin of it. They are "not chargeable with schism, since they who have the *power of continuing or altering our Church at their pleasure*, have *given them liberty to withdraw*, and have taken their places of worship *under their protection* as well as ours."

If I understand this plea right, it is a millstone

* *Ad Tract. de Minis. Evang, ab Hadr. Sarav.* Edit. Belgo, c. i.
† Chap. xviii.

about the neck of all the rest; because it shews, that the apologist of the Dissenters hath argued without principles, and so hath fallen into a manifest contradiction. He began with mocking at the Church of England, as having no *foundation* but upon the *King and Parliament:* or, as another Dissenter hath expressed it, in the like insulting strain, as "*built upon the foundation of the Lords and Commons, the King himself being the chief corner stone.*" And they have argued, that it even ceases to be a Church of Christ, because it acts under the allowance of the civil power. Yet in their own case, the King and Parliament, by an act of grace, can make schism to be no schism! The protection we have from the civil government is cast in our teeth, as a disadvantage, which extends even to the *unchurching* of us, and throwing us out of the kingdom of Christ; but the same thing (supposing them to have it) takes away from them the guilt of their separation! And thus they give to the King and Parliament, the privilege of God himself, who only can forgive sin; which is more than we ever allowed them.

It is a very false suggestion, that our civil government can alter the Church *at their pleasure.* There is, indeed, a sense, in which it may be said, that a man has *power* to do whatever he can do by *force* and violence; but still there is an essential difference between the power of force and the power of *right* and *authority.* The Church of England never can be altered *legally,* without the consent and act of the *Convocation,* who are a part of the constitution; and if it were otherwise done, it must be done by an act of violence, against the rights of Englishmen, for Englishmen do not lose their rights by being Christians and Churchmen; as their enemies are inclined to have it. There can be no power or autho-

rity in laymen to make or unmake a Church, any more than there can be a power in the Church to make or unmake the civil constitution; and nothing can confound these powers but an overbearing principle of infidelity: from which may God deliver us: who hath promised that the gates of Hell (the judicial power of the adversaries of Jesus Christ) shall not prevail against us. Suppose the civil power should make an act, that the King shall ordain priests, or that priests shall not baptize children, nor consecrate the sacrament, what would such an act signify? Therefore, they have not the power to alter the Church *at their pleasure;* for this might be their pleasure, if their wits, or the grace of God were to forsake them. Such a power, if it were claimed, was never exercised even by Heathen persecutors. However, the Dissenters do not seem unwilling that such a tyrannical power should be exercised, and appear to relish the idea of it, if it be but turned against the Church of England. No one *spiritual* act can be exercised, nor is it claimed by the civil power in this country; which can neither baptize, nor ordain, nor absolve, nor consecrate, nor excommunicate; although the Dissenters, in the heat of their zeal, have given the state a spiritual power, and even more, over us and themselves too. But the state can say, who shall or shall not partake of temporalities: and this every state will say, some more, some less, as long as the Church accepts of their protection, and enjoys a legal maintenance and support under them. Worldly politics in such a case will be sure to interfere, and abuses will arise. Churchmen will be apt to accommodate themselves to the views and inclinations of the state, or some of the acting members of the state, who are their friends; their doctrines will change with the times; their consci-

ences will become too flexible and easy, and the people whom they teach will be in danger from them. There is no convenience in this world without its inconvenience. When the state was schismatical in the days of the grand usurpation, the Church of that time could find no such sin as *sacrilege* in the Scripture, for the fear of giving offence to their patrons, who were deep in the guilt of it; and the *Assembly of Divines* (as it was remarked long ago by Bishop *Patrick)* avoided all mention of it in their *Annotations.*

12. The Dissenters hold themselves blameless, because many persons of the Church of England, and some of great and popular character, have justified and even applauded their separation.

I find great stress laid upon this circumstance, which is blazoned out with pompous words and splendid quotations, as well of what hath been *spoken* (or so reported) as written. But the fear or favour of men, especially of men too attentive to the interests of this world (as some of their friends have certainly been) is a very unsound bottom for the Dissenters to rest upon: and so they esteem it themselves, when it is on our side. But if any false brethren amongst us take part with them, all such are *excellent men, ornaments of the establishment,* and of unanswerable authority. Sometimes the Dissenters are all for the Scripture; Jesus Christ is their only King; and to him they appeal for the rectitude of their proceedings; but if they find a flatterer amongst us, they make the most of him; and some such are always to be found; for all are not Israel that are of Israel; and it doth not follow, that a man must be true to the Church of England, because it hath introduced him to a seat in the House of Lords. Temporal considerations bring some men into the Church, whose hearts and

affections never were, nor ever will be with it. Of such no honest man can approve; and therefore the approbation of such, with all their testimonies and certificates, is but of little value at last. Bishop *Hoadley* was of this character; a Socinian in principle: who, while he was celebrated by the enemies of the Church of England, (and perhaps assisted toward his advancement) for having banished all *Mitres* and *Lordships*, and *Spiritual Courts*, out of the *Kingdom of Christ*, was, himself, an answer to every thing he had written: who scrupled not to adorn himself with a Mitre and a Lordship in one of the first preferments in this Church; while he was a greater favourer of those who were out of it, than of those who were in it; unless they were in it upon his own principles.

Amongst other bright ornaments of the Church who applaud the separation of the Dissenters, the authors of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions* are brought in. These are not only tender to the Dissenters, but they rather think we shall never do well without them; that they are necessary to *preserve the virtue of the nation:* to save our *religious liberty:* to prevent the return of *slavery;* and to serve as a check, lest we should cast *a favourable aspect toward Rome.* These things are fairly said, but not truly; and if we consider a little farther from whence they came, little honour will accrue to the Dissenters from the testimony of these authors. For it is by no means clear that they were *members of our own Church,* though they most solemnly and repeatedly professed themselves so to be in their work. It was suspected very early, that they were not such as they called themselves, but enemies under the disguise of friends. Of this their work itself carries some internal marks, which seem to have escaped them unawares.—*Ficta cito ad Naturam reciderint*

suam. The author of *Free and Impartial Considerations* on the *Free and Candid Disquisitions,* pressed them with this (Anno 1751) and with great appearance of reason. He told them farther, "It begins now to be reported, and I partly believe it, that an eminent Dissenter, well known by his writings, has had a hand more or less in the Disquisitions *." But, some few years after, in 1758, when this secret had been searched a little farther, or had transpired of itself, I find an author, and I believe, a very honest one, asserting in the plainest terms, that those authors were actually Dissenters; and taxing the party very roundly with their prevarication, in these words: "Amidst the greatest indulgence, and in open defiance of the laws, they impugned and libelled our Liturgy, and our Constitution, without the least proof or foundation; they charged our Liturgy with all the defects, with all the faults, improprieties, and corruptions, which had been suggested by Papists, Heretics, Enthusiasts, and the most inveterate enemies of our constitution. And for fear the people should say, that an enemy had done this, they, by the most solemn and repeated insinuations, declared themselves to be *true and dutiful sons of the established Church* †." If, after such professions, these writers were Dissenters, their Disquisitions exhibit such a scene of treachery, prevarication, self-adulation, and ingratitude, to the government *under* which, and the established Church *with* which they live, as is scarcely to be paralleled in history.

On this supposition, all the fine things those authors thought fit to say of the Dissenters, and their virtues,

* Page 59.

† Case of the Royal Martyr considered with candour, p. 333, 334.

and the nature and merits of their separation, are of no authority; for that Dissenters should praise Dissenters, is nothing wonderful: but, if Dissenters did this, under the name of *true and dutiful sons of the Church,* then such praise is against them in every word of it. What sort of principles they must be, which can reconcile men's consciences to such Jesuitical frauds and disguises, they who practise them are bound to consider.

If the Dissenters think they can justify their separation by the *praise of men;* let them proceed fairly, and take it, such as it is, *all together.* They should remember and estimate properly, how much of it comes from the bench of our Bishops, and how much from the seat of the scornful; how universally they are befriended and admired by Deists, Free-thinkers, Socinian Philosophers, and loose livers: who delighting to see the Church opposed, and Christian people divided, are exactly of the same opinion with some of those great *ornaments of the establishment* of whose testimony our apologist hath so loudly boasted. "*I heartily thank God,*" says the author of *the Independent Whig,* "*that we have Dissenters, and I hope we shall never be without them**."

13. The last and the most general arguments on which the Dissenters depend; and which, if it were just, would render all other arguments superfluous, is this; that all men *have a right to judge and choose for themselves in matters of religion.*

This is an extensive principle, which justifies all sects, and supersedes all institutions and sacraments whatsoever. It also shews the Dissenters of this day,

* Vol. iii. p. 223.

who have recourse to it, to be quite a different class of men, from the *Puritans* in the days of *Elizabeth;* for here they extend their claims from schism up to heresy, and beyond it, even into the privileges and immunities of infidelity itself. The Puritans formerly judged against us in our discipline; but the Dissenters and their friends, now judge against us in our doctrines. For thus saith the author of the *Independent Whig,* another apologist of the Dissenters.—"No man ought to pay any submission to that *doctrine,* or discipline which he *does not like :*" and the war, which was once carried on against *Prelacy* and *Ceremonies,* is now turned against *Articles* and *Creeds.*

If the Dissenters at large have this right of choosing what they *like,* and rejecting what they *dislike:* then the *Quakers* have it; and why not the *Jews* and the *Mahometans?* For, I desire to know, what there is betwixt us and them, but *matters of religion.*

As to this affair of *choosing,* especially in *matters of religion,* there are strange examples of human perverseness and wickedness. How often did the people *choose new Gods? Heresy* is so called, because it is a doctrine which a man doth not *receive* but *choose* for himself; and if his choice is of *right,* there can be no such thing as heresy in the world. But *heresy* is reckoned among the *works of the flesh;* and they that *heap up teachers to themselves,* are said to do it *of their own lusts.* Thus every case becomes desperate; for *lust,* being an irrational, brutal principle, hears no reason; and nothing but disorder and confusion can follow, when this principle takes the lead in religion. When men *took wives of such as they chose,* and had no rule but this rule of choice; the earth was soon *filled with violence;* and if men may

take what they choose in religion, sects and divisions, strife and envying, rebellion and sacrilege, without end, must be the consequence: and so it is already recorded in the annals of this kingdom.

POSTSCRIPT.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST SEPARATION OF THE DISSENTERS FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The preceding Short View of the Argument betwixt the Church and the Dissenters, having brought the authors of *Free and Candid Disquisitions on the Liturgy of the Church of England,* under our consideration; I cannot help mentioning on this occasion, that I have a manuscript in my possession of seventy-two sheets, containing remarks on that work, written immediately after its publication, by one of the best scholars and best divines of this century.

The public never did, and probably never will, receive any information from these papers; but to me they have been very entertaining and instructive. In one of the author's notes upon a large quotation from the Epistles of St. *Cyprian,* I find the following account of the rise and progress of the schism, which hath troubled the state of the Church, more or less, ever since the Reformation: and as this little work may fall into the hands of some readers, who never heard, whether our Dissenters originally divided *from us,* or we *from them;* it may be useful to shew

how the case stands. The fact is this: they *went out from us*, after the full establishment of this Church.

"For, in the year, 1548, 2 Ed. VI. the *Archbishop* of *Canterbury*, and twelve of the other principal *Bishops* and *Divines*, joined in a *committee*, drew up the *form of celebrating the Lord's Supper*; and, after that, of the rest of the *Common Prayer*; chiefly from the best *primitive formularies* of *public prayer* they could find; which was soon after confirmed by *authority of Parliament*, with this *testimony* subjoined, viz. that *none could doubt, but that the authors were inspired, and assisted therein, by the Holy Ghost*. At the same time, (as *Nichols*, in his *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, observes) it was the peculiar happiness of our *Reformation*, that it had been established by the concurrent authority of *Church* and *State*, so we enjoyed the most perfect agreement and unanimity of all orders of men among us; the very name of those swarms of *sectarists* (the filthy *pollutions* whereof have, *since, infected* so far, and wide) being then not so much as heard of in our land. Neither did any one, either at home or abroad, (the envy, ill nature, heterodoxy of *Calvin* only excepted) charge us, in the least, with any remains of *Popish* leaven, as mixt with our *services* and *orders*, or any thing that looked that way: but all men honoured our *Church*, as the most *holy mother* of the people of *God* committed to her, as well as the most strenuous opposer of *Antichrist*, and the chief bulwark of the *Reformation*. And so matters continued: not a *dog moving his tongue*, or sowing the least seed of *schism*, or *dissension*, to corrupt her. Till under the persecution in Queen *Mary's* time, when, many flying, (as it was to be expected) into the Protestant States abroad, there settled themselves into little *Chapelries* or *Churches*, by permission of the

magistrates, according to the order of the *Common Prayer,* and *service of the Church of England.* Only at *Frankfort,* one *Fox,* a man of a turbulent innovating spirit, with others associated to him, were drawn into fondness for *Calvin's plan (schismatical as it was,* from all *Christian Churches since the Apostles)* and made themselves a *new farrago* of *public prayers,* as opposite to the *English,* and consequently to those of all the *primitive Churches,* as they could devise: which upon Queen *Mary's* death, they brought home with them: and, in preaching and writing, endeavoured to *force,* or *palm* upon the people; but yet, without any *direct* and *open schism:* till one *Cartwright,* in a theological disputation held at *Cambridge* before the Queen [Elizabeth] being rebuked by her for his unreasonable and turbulent manner of conducting himself in it, thereupon went off, full fraught with *spleen* and *spite,* to *Calvin:* from whence returning, with *new ulcers* added to his *old sores,* and causing fresh disturbances, he was expelled his college, and deprived of the *Margaret Professorship,* by Dr. *Whitgift,* who was head of the same *college* [Trinity] and *Vice Chancellor* of the *University.* Whereupon, with others of his own *Calvinistic cast,* he began to set up his *novo-puritanical schism,* with *classes, conventicles,* &c. in avowed contempt and rebellion against the *Church.* The smoking brands of which fire of schism being blown up by the tainted breath of his followers, broke out, in half an age, into a flame that once set three kingdoms into a blaze, brought one of the best of Kings to the *block,* extirpated *episcopacy* and the *peerage,* so as without the visible interposition of Providence, there appeared no more hopes of their restoration for ever. Neither are the *coals* of the *old brands* yet quenched, but they burn still under the

embers of *sedition*, wherewith they are raked up, and threaten, yet, new and worse *fires*, perhaps to the *civil*, but certainly to the *religious state* of things among us; which God avert!"

This good man did not live to see the dismembering of the British empire, by the separation of the American colonies, begun and carried on by the same party both here and there, to the loss of so many thousand lives, and the oppressing of the people with new and endless burthens of taxes. So notorious was the case, that even the gentlemen of the army who had an opportunity of making proper observations, and were properly disposed to make them, brought home this report with them to the mother country, that if the Church of England had but obtained that timely support in the colonies, for which it had so often petitioned, the American Rebellion had never happened; and if this government shall be as remiss toward itself, in the mother country, as it has been toward the colonies, the same evils will soon break out at home.

AN

ESSAY ON MAN,

ACCORDING TO THE

HOLY SCRIPTURE.

CHAPTER I.
OF MAN UNDER SIN.

CHAPTER II.
OF HIS REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

CHAPTER III.
OF THE NEW CREATURE.

INTRODUCTION.

No man can satisfy himself or others about the Origin of Evil: and to give an account of man, without any account of evil, is to do little. The question being far too deep for us, we must be contented with such a view of the subject, as the Gospel presents to us; and this should make us easy, till we have further lights, and stronger faculties.

The disciples of Jesus Christ, seeing a man who had been blind from his birth, proposed the case as a difficulty for which they were not able to account: "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind*!" They expected that their Master would consider the question as they did; but instead of this, he takes such a view of the case, and gives such a solution of it, as they had not been able to conceive. He goes at once to the final cause, for which this, and all other examples of evil, are permitted in the world; the glory of God.—Strange, that God should be glorified in evil, by which he seems to be dishonoured; but so it is.

If we ask ourselves by what causes such or such strange effects come to pass; experience teaches us how hard it is to answer the question: but if we ask, for what end, the enquiry becomes more hopeful, as well as more useful. In the ways of God, the grounds and reasons, on which the Divine justice proceeds, are out of our sight; while the ends, which the Di-

* John ix. 2. (See Sermon VIII.)

vine goodness has in view, are open to our sight, and level to our capacities. This we suppose to be the reason why our Saviour gave a turn to the question, so different from what his disciples expected. *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,* said he, *i. e.* so as to account for his blindness; but he was born blind for this end, *that the works of God might be made manifest in him.*

To all questions of the same kind, the same answer will serve. Evil is permitted in the world, that God may be manifested to us as the author of good. The sun is never so glorious as at his rising, when the shadows of the night fly before him. The Creator might have blessed us with perpetual day; but his wisdom and goodness are better understood in the victory which light obtains over darkness. And it is not clear, that good can be effectually distinguished, and received as what it is, till we have had the opportunity of comparing it with its contrary. The attributes of God were more fully displayed in the restoration of a man who was born blind, than if he had been born with his eye-sight. The physician derives his honour, not from the healthy, but from the sick; and the health which comes after sickness is doubly valuable. —The mind may be insensible of its *preservation,* and yet feel and understand the blessing of a *recovery.* Sensations of wonder and gratitude may be excited in the patient himself, and in the friends who are witnesses to his cure; of which they would have had no experience, but for the evil of his disease, and the unexpected blessing of its removal.

If, on such an occasion as this, any one were to dwell on the difficulties of the case, the symptoms of the distemper, the skill displayed in the cure; and all with a view to the honour of the physician: the patient would be a strange man, if he should be offended, and mistake all this for a reflection upon himself, and his late infirmity: he would join with delight in recounting the wonders of his deliverance, and in magnifying the skill by which it had been brought to pass. Yet such is the absurdity of human wisdom, that the philosophy of the present day is offended with an Heathen, if he speaks truth like a Christian. Pliny, the natural historian, observes, that the weakness and misery of man's nature is such that it seems a sin to be born. A Christian editor takes it as an affront

upon himself; and puts the following note upon it—*Hæc humanæ naturæ convicia à verâ philosophiâ maximè abhorrent.*

Every Christian, whose eyes are really opened, may apply what I have said to himself.—God is the PHYSICIAN; his power and goodness are magnified in healing the infirmities of our nature. If we feel ourselves offended with the consideration of this, that offence is one of the worst symptoms of our disease. The weakness of human reason, says the great Paschal, appears more in those who are insensible of it, than in such as know and confess it. We have no honour to maintain against our Creator: and his honour may well consist with our abasement. The Apostle was convinced of this, when he said—*Most gladly will I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* But such doctrine as this never did, nor ever will, agree with human pride, which pleases itself with other sentiments; how wisely and justly it will soon appear from what follows. Yet, after all that can be said, the Pharisees will still ask, with a sneer upon the goodness of God, *are we blind?* Blessed and happy is he who can reply against them—*One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.*

AN

ESSAY ON MAN.

CHAPTER I.

OF MAN UNDER SIN.

During the state of man's innocence, an harmony was established between the body and the spirit. The ruling principle preserved its superiority, and the inferior was under due regulation: the appetites were subordinate to the will; sense was governed by reason; the body was subject to the spirit; and all were in obedience to God. Peace was the immediate fruit of this subjection; and immortality would have been its reward. But it is the uniform doctrine of the Scripture, that since the entrance of sin, human nature is become degenerate; and that under this degeneracy, sense overcomes reason, the appetites corrupt the will, and the will is so inclined to evil, that it cannot be turned toward God, till it is *called* and *moved* thereto by his grace. When the Scripture speaks of man in this state, it represents him as alienated from God, darkened in his understanding,

averse to righteousness, in captivity and bondage to sin, and subject to wrath and condemnation. The reason and equity of all this I am not enquiring into; I speak only of the fact; and it will appear from the Scripture, compared with the natural state of man, that the fact is as it is here represented. It is not necessary that we should take a large compass in order to shew this: the Apostle St. *Paul*, who insists frequently and earnestly upon this subject, hath saved us the trouble, by collecting into one view the most remarkable passages in the Old Testament relating to the depravity of the human character.

In his Epistle to the *Romans*, he begins with describing the deplorable corruption of the Gentiles under their apostasy. And as the Jew was apt to value himself upon comparison with them, the Apostle checks his vanity, by informing him, that nature is the same in all men: that the Jew had little advantage of the Heathen, except that *the oracles of God were committed to him.* Coming still nearer to the point, he asks, *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.* Then he proceeds to confirm this by an induction of particulars from the writings of the Old Testament. "As it is written; there is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their

ways: and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." These expressions, collected from the Psalms and the Prophets, are to be understood as evidences of the proposition before advanced, that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin: and they mark out so particularly the several species of depravity, to which the sinfulness of nature extends, that instead of searching for other parallel declarations, it will be sufficient that we examine into the truth and meaning of these. They to whom the Apostle addressed himself, were well convinced of the corruption of the Gentiles: but they were apt to consider themselves as another species of men. They boasted of their *freedom* as the children of Abraham, and had no notion of that natural bondage of sin, from which the Son was to *make them free*. Therefore the Apostle argues with respect to them, that as all these things were written in *the law*, they were spoken to those who were *under the law*, even to the elect children of Abraham, who thought themselves excepted from the rest of mankind, *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God*. A sense of self-sufficiency, native dignity, and independence, was the ruin of Lucifer: and if there were any thing of natural purity in man, he might be boasting of it, and setting up for merit in opposition to his Creator. But under the present constitution of things, all men are guilty, and every mouth is stopped: that is, every mouth is stopped in reason, though not in fact. They, who know themselves, will be silent; but many mouths of the ignorant are still open; and they will continue so, till the great day of inquisition, when the mouth of all iniquity shall be as effectually stopped, as it is now confuted. And what do we lose by this convic-

tion? Nothing, but the gratification of pride, a base principle; a lust as hurtful to the spirit, as the foulest appetites are to the body. In every other respect we are gainers. We are still in the hands of a merciful Being, whom we may safely leave to make his own terms with us, and who humbles us for no end, but that we may be the more effectually exalted.

But let us now attend to the Apostle's description; the particulars of which arrange themselves under three distinct heads: and relate, first, to the *thoughts* of men; secondly, to their *words;* and thirdly, to their *works.* The subject opens with these words—*There is none righteous, no not one.* The chief thing here to be observed, is the universality of the corruption asserted. Jews and Gentiles are condemned without the exception of any individual: and this general application of the words, on which the Apostle so much insists, will teach us how the first verse of the 14th Psalm is to be understood, as I shall take occasion to remark in another place. The word *righteous* is a term proper to a court of justice. The law says, *If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the* righteous, *and condemn the wicked.* Therefore to be righteous, is to be clear of the offence of which any one is accused. But no man ever was or ever will be qualified by nature to abide such a trial in the sight of God. The law, which should direct him to perfection, serves only to expose his guilt; and hence the Apostle calls the law, the *strength of sin;* the instrument by which sin prevails against man, to convict him of unrighteousness. If this be true, how is it that the Scripture speaks of so many righteous men, and particularly of the righteousness of Abraham? The answer is obvious enough, that the righ-

teousness ascribed to the servants of God, is a *righteousness without the law,* even the obedience of *faith, accounted for righteousness.* And this commutation (if I may so call it) is a proof, that righteousness is not inherent; that man of himself is an olive *wild by nature,* and, consequently, fruitless; a *branch which cannot bear fruit of itself.* And where are we to look for the origin of this evil, but in the stock from whence all men are derived? It was as impossible for Adam to beget an uncorrupt offspring when he became a sinner, as for him to have begotten an angel while he was innocent. This doctrine was preserved by tradition in the earliest ages; and the world hath always been so full of its effects, and hath carried such striking marks of it, that it would have been marvellous indeed, if it had any where been totally forgotten. *Job* asks, with respect to the birth of man, *who can bring forth a clean thing out of an unclean*?* And the friends of Job were full of the same sentiments. One of them saith, *what is man, that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous†?* Another of them asks, nearly in the same terms, *how then can man be justified with God: or how can he be clean that is born of a woman‡?* This carries the unrighteousness of man up to his birth: but the psalmist carries it still farther, even to his conception: *behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me§.* The universality of death, as a penalty upon the posterity of Adam, is a demonstration of the universality of sin: for God is neither so unmindful of his works, as to permit them to be destroyed by accident; nor yet so unjust, as to inflict the punishment of sin, where sin itself is not

* Chap. xiv. 4. † Chap. xv. 4. ‡ Chap. xxv. 4.
§ Psalm li. 5.

to be found. *Death passed upon all men,* saith the Apostle, *for that all have sinned.* If all are punished, all are guilty: and thus it appears from the constitution of nature, that *there is none righteous, no not one.*

If we now enquire, what are the effects of human depravity, and wherein this unrighteousness actually consists, the Apostle proceeds to inform us, *there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.* Unrighteousness is the unavoidable consequence of ignorance; for no man can go farther in his practice than his *understanding* and knowledge will carry him. Where no wheat has been sown none is produced: but weeds are blown about with every wind; and the matter of the earth, wherever it is turned up, shews itself to be already impregnated with their seeds. The understanding here signified is not the knowledge of arts and sciences, in which men, with the advantages of education and exercise, may excel by their natural talents; but that better *understanding*, by which we know God and depart from evil *. This no man hath naturally; *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually* †. It is imputed to this depravity of thought, that the *wickedness of man* was so *great* before the flood; not of this or that man in particular, but *of man,* of the species. What else could produce such universal corruption of manners? But it may still be objected, all this was spoken of the antediluvian race of men. It was so; but *what then? are we better than they? No, in no wise.* And the Scripture assures us, the day of judgment shall find the world of unbelievers just such men

* *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the* Lord, *that is* wisdom, *and to depart from evil is* understanding. Job xxviii. 28.

† Gen. vi. 5.

as they were in the days of Noah. It does not appear, that the *understanding* of man ever discovered the *true God;* but on the contrary, that when it was set on work, it was apt to distinguish that knowledge of him which is handed down by *tradition* *. The world, instead of knowing God by their *wisdom,* reasoned themselves backward from that knowledge to idolatry †.

When the Hebrews apostatized and fell into the ways of the heathen, God told them by his prophet, that they *made them idols according to their own understanding* ‡: and it is remarked of the heathens in general, that by *professing themselves to be wise,* that is, by reasoning on such principles as were borrowed from the fund of their own imagination, *they became fools,* and *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, &c.*—That strange propensity to idolatry, which prevailed among all nations of the world, and which no man really wise can reflect upon without confusion and astonishment, would incline us to believe, there was something of the nature of that crime in the first transgression in Paradise; which brought with it an infatuation upon the children of Adam, inclining them to prefer any false object to the Creator of the world. A charge is grounded on this fatal error, which is urged with great severity by the prophet *Jeremiah,* and extended to the nature of men in general. *Learn not,* says he to the House of Israel, *the way of the heathen* §. *O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might: all the wise men of the nations are altogether brutish and foolish—the gods that have not made the heavens and*

* Αρχαιος μεν ουν τις λογος, και πατριος εστι πασιν ανθρωποις, ὡς εκ Θεου τα παντα, και δια Θεου ἡμιν συνεστηκεν. Arist. de Mundo.

† 1 Cor. i. 21. ‡ Hos. xiii. 2. § Jer. chap. x.

the earth, even they shall perish.—Every man is brutish in his knowledge.—They (the gods of the Gentiles) *are vanity and a work of errors—the portion of Jacob is not like them, for he is the* FORMER OF ALL THINGS—*the Lord of Hosts is his name.—O Lord, I know that the* WAY OF MAN *is not in himself.* That the Gentiles preferred the creature to the Creator, is a fact so notorious, that we cannot but assent to the prophet's doctrine, and conclude, that the knowledge of *God's Being* is not natural to the mind of man; much less of his divine *will* and holy *law.* God, who knows the extent of our understanding, hath never required us to invent true religion, but only to receive it, and to preserve it when delivered; so that great allowances have been made for those who had no opportunities of information. When the votaries of *Jupiter* and *Mercury* were exhorted by St. *Paul* to turn from *those vanities to the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*;* the Apostle added, upon this occasion, that God *in times past had suffered all nations to walk in their own way.* This was the *way* of idolatry; a way common to *all nations;* and which would have been followed even by the children of Abraham, unless the father had been called away from his kindred to walk before God in a state of separation from the world of idolaters. On another like occasion, when the Apostle preached against the heathenish superstition at Athens, he told them also, that God had *winked* at their idolatry, as a practice which had prevailed in the times of their *ignorance* †. This was a mortifying apology, when offered in behalf of men who had established a public mart of science, and valued themselves highly upon

* Acts xiv. 15. † Acts xvii. 30.

their intellectual attainments. But the case was rather worse with them than with the illiterate. Being able to multiply words by the rule of art, when they had no real knowledge of things at the bottom; and to defend and disguise their folly with the ornaments of wisdom, they were the more unlikely to forsake it; and accordingly, the Apostle had little or no success among them. All they had in view was to turn his sublime doctrine into a matter of debate, as they did every thing else: so *Paul departed from among them*, leaving them to the vain janglings of their own philosophy.

If it should still be made a question, after what hath been said, whether the prevailing of idolatry over the nations of the world ought to be imputed to a mistake propagated by evil communication, or to an error breeding in the mind; I think the difference in the present case is not very material. If men agreed so universally in corrupting the first article of religion: if every breath carried the infection, and every heart so easily received it, the dishonour is rather extenuated than aggravated, by supposing the seeds of the distemper to be latent in the constitution. That the Gentiles before the preaching of the Gospel were alienated from the life of God *through the* IGNORANCE *that was in them* *, and that the Jews were perpetually falling into the like apostasy, even against the remon-

* Eph. iv. 18. Here I would refer my reader to the works of Mr. *Leland*, vol. i. p. 406. *On the Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation;* wherein he shews, that the representations of the deplorable state of the Gentiles, made to us in the Scripture, are literally true, and agreeable to fact; and are confirmed by the undoubted monuments of Paganism. And also that the attempts of some moderns to explain away those representations are vain and insufficient. The design of the work is good; and it is executed with learning and perspicuity.

strances of their better knowledge, is a fact sufficient to explain and justify this part of our subject.

But the ignorance of the mind is farther aggravated and confirmed by its *inattention—there is none that seeketh after God.* The affections of man are engaged by other things; *he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth.* Honour, wealth, and pleasure are the objects of his attention: they furnish him with the matter of his conversation, and his thoughts are so completely filled with the means of obtaining them, that the great subjects of the other world are excluded. Tell him of any thing that concerns him as a man of this world, and he is at leisure to hear you; but if you speak of what is infinitely more important, and concerns him more nearly, you find him pre-engaged. When St. *Paul* discoursed to the wise men of *Athens,* on the living God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment; how indifferent did these great things appear to them, and with what coldness were they received!—Well might the prophet say, that when God should be made known to the heathens, he should be *found of them* that *sought him not.*—Had they been seeking after the Creator, and in love with truth, they would have rejoiced at the sight of such a messenger, who was capable of giving them all the satisfaction they could desire; but, instead of this, some mocked, others accused him as a *setter forth of strange gods;* some despised him as a *babbler,* others said, they would *hear him again* at another time. So true is it, that the *natural man,* or man as he is in himself without the aid of divine grace, *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.* His wisdom, like himself, is earthly: and wherever it prevails, the wisdom of God is either

tasteless or disagreeable. The wise men of Athens were no worse than other wise men of this world; the same carnal mind which possessed them, whether it be in the Jew or the Greek, in the ancient or the modern, will always be productive of the like stupidity.

Ignorance of God, and disaffection to the things of heaven, so manifest in all men while they are in a state of nature, are strong proofs of our original corruption; to which the Apostle adds that strange propensity to error in opinion, which led mankind into the abominable errors of idolatry. These seem to have been chiefly alluded to, in the words which follow in the order of his description of human nature—*they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.* The sense of this hath partly been considered before; for though the words may signify indefinitely any departure from the way of truth and holiness, yet we hear not of any species of apostasy which became general, except that of idolatry: concerning which, much hath occurred to us already. Yet I have some further observations to make upon it. If we look back for the beginning of this crime of *going out of the way,* we shall find that it happened in Paradise; where God by immediate revelation taught a right way to Adam, and called it the *way of the tree of life;* a way which would have guided him to the perfection of his nature in the enjoyment of God, the source of life and felicity. But from this way he turned aside, when he applied to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for wisdom and exaltation independent of his Creator. His posterity have been engaged in a search equally fruitless and dangerous, as often as they have consulted their own will and fol-

lowed their own way; *seeking death in the error of their life* *; not by design, for death cannot be an object of choice, but by necessary consequence, through blindness and disaffection. For the prophet hath informed us, *that the way of man is not in himself:* when he hath lost that way into which he was directed by the Author of his being, his own sagacity never can bring him back to it again; but the farther he proceeds, the greater is his deviation. The wise man tells us, *there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death* †. How miserable is this, that the way which leads to death should seem to be a right one! But such is the fact: every way which leads from the true God and the true religion must terminate in death, notwithstanding all the fine things that may be said in commendation of it. The experiment has been made on various occasions, and always with the same success. The serpent recommended a way, as better than that which God had revealed; but it proved to be a way of death, and all the children of Adam are witnesses of the issue.—When the generation of men before the flood departed from God, or, as the Scripture itself expresses it, when *all flesh corrupted his way upon the earth* ‡, death and destruction soon ensued; every thing that was in the earth died; except those few who escaped by virtue of the divine covenant of mercy. When God brought a people out of Egypt for his service, they *turned aside out of the way which he commanded them* ‖, and some met death immediately from the sword, others more remotely, at the end of their wanderings in the wilderness. Having turned aside from the right way of faith and obedience, they were pu-

* Wisd. i. 12. † Prov. xiv. 12.
‡ Gen. vi. 12. 17. ‖ Exod. xxxii. 8.

nished by being made to *wander out of the way;* and even to die in this state of deviation, without the enjoyment of the promised land; which happened to them in a figure, as an example to others, who *through an evil heart of unbelief should depart from the living God**.

When men have begun to *think,* independently on God's will, and to follow the suggestions of their own hearts, they have never failed to turn aside from the way of life into the ways of death. Therefore it occurs next in the Apostle's description, that *they are together become unprofitable:* for, to use his own language, what *fruit* can there be in those things, the *end of which is death?* They who depart from God are unprofitable to themselves, and to him who created them. They can reap no possible benefit from their own destruction; and if the most perfect of the servants of God are to look upon themselves as unprofitable on the score of merit, after all their endeavours, the ungodly, who have apostatized of malice, must be of that other species of unprofitable servants, who are to be cast into outer darkness. The word *unprofitable,* if more strictly rendered according to the original in the 14th Psalm, is *putrid, filthy,* or *stinking:* the meaning of which is this, that man by the present sinfulness of his nature is become offensive to God, as a dead carcase, or a body full of sores: in allusion to which, the Psalmist saith in another place, *my wounds stink,* (meaning the wounds of sin) *and are corrupt through my foolishness:* but when this quality of sin is purged away, and a subsequent purification takes place by virtue of an accepted sacrifice or burnt offering, then the Lord is said to *smell a*

* Heb. iii. 12.

sweet savour; as at the offering of a sacrifice by Noah, after the world had perished in its corruption.

We have now considered the depravity of human nature, as it shews itself in the thoughts or counsels of men, with respect to God and his religion. It is asserted moreover, that *there is none that doeth good, no not one:* and this is proved by a particular introduction of their words and their works. First of their words—*their throat is an open sepulchre.* If the *inward man* is dead by nature, as the Scripture teaches us, then the outer may be considered as the structure of a sepulchre, whose *inside is filled with dead mens' bones, and all uncleanness.* When we remove the covering of a sepulchre, there comes forth from it an offensive odour of death: and if we would know what is in the heart of man, he must discover it to us by his words; which are of such a sort as to betray and publish the corruption of his mind. When he opens his mouth, he opens a grave, and the disagreeable savour of his unsound speech shews that there is a dead corpse at the bottom. But it seems as if there were something farther to be understood; their throat is not only a sepulchre, but an *open sepulchre.* Men of impure thoughts have not the modesty to keep their mouths shut, but they glory in their shame. When their minds are given up to folly, they cannot be satisfied till they have made it public. The more unsound their discourse is in its quality, you have so much the more of it in quantity: and if we observe the world throughout, few people have more to say than common swearers, slanderers, blasphemers, and reprobates.

For the iniquity of their words, men are also compared to serpents—*with their tongues they have used*

deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips. When interest and worldly affection dictate to the tongues of men, they are double and deceitful, and are aptly represented by the forked or double tongue of the serpent; for if it serves their purpose, they make no scruple of telling two different stories about the same thing. But the words of the slanderer are worse than those of the common liar; they wound and infect at the same time, like the venomous asp, whose bite is incurable.

Many a fair character of an innocent person hath been ruined, and the comfort of his life irrecoverably destroyed, by the bite of calumny and detraction; so that the bite of an asp would have been preferred as the less hurtful of the two; yet how common is the practice; and what an insipid life would many talkative people lead, if their conversation were to be purged of slander! It is observed by St. *James*, that *the tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison**: but certainly that poison was no part of man's original constitution, when he was pure and upright, as he came from the hands of his Creator: it was derived from that father of lies, who infused into our first parents a poison, which hath run in the blood of their posterity ever since. So soon after they are born they shew the effects of it; for the first use they generally make of their speech is to lie; and if they are permitted, either through wilful folly or neglect, to follow their natural disposition, deceit will be their practice to the end of their lives. So strong is the propensity to *lying*, that all children have need to be warned and instructed against this evil. Many are cured by the vigilance, severity, good example, and frequent admoni-

* James iii. 8

tions of their parents: others retain the habit till the age of discretion, when either the fear of shame, or the more powerful principles of religion and conscience, get the better of it; but too many, especially of the common sort, who are ignorant of good principles, and feel but little from the impressions of honour, carry the habit with them to their graves: never ceasing to lie, till they have ceased to speak.

To their lying and deceit other evil symptoms are added. The same poison which infects their speech with falshood, *fills* their mouth with *cursing and bitterness.* Their minds are disordered with pride, malice, envy, and hatred; passions, which break out naturally in bitter expressions; and where the passions are under no regulation, they are uttered upon every slight occasion. They who are stirring about amongst the mixed multitude of the world, and have opportunities of observing human nature in its uncultivated state, will find their ears assaulted by many miserable creatures, whose speech seems to have been given them for no end, but to utter imprecations against themselves and all that come in their way. Others contract such an habit of using the tremendous name of God in common discourse, that they are unable to deliver any insignificant narrative without inserting an oath or a curse between every two or three words of it; where it is so far from adding any thing to the sense, or heightening the wit, that it breaks the connexion, and turns their discourse into nonsense. What possible reasons can be assigned for this absurd practice, or how can we describe it, but in those severe words of the Apostle—*the poison of asps is under their lips; their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness?* For such conversation is neither rational, nor pleasant, nor profitable. The best and the worst we can

say for it, is this of the Scripture, that it is *constitutional.*

So much for the *words* of men. We come now to their *works—their feet are swift to shed blood.* This is spoken with allusion to beasts of prey, whose swiftness of foot is given them for purposes of murder and bloodshed; that they may overtake and devour those harmless creatures, which have no strength to resist, nor speed to escape them. Here I am almost confounded with my subject; and could willingly drop the prosecution of it; for this seems to be an hard saying: yet if we have patience to examine into the fact, I fear that the experience of all countries and of all ages hath shewn, that this part of the human character is as natural as the rest. And this age has not been wanting in examples of cruelty and blood shedding, with a degree of wantonness and wickedness never heard of before in the world; as the history of what has lately passed in France must abundantly testify. But whence do these things come, but from the nature of man, of which thirst of blood seems to be a natural appetite? For the first man, who followed nature after its corruption, was a murderer. *Cain* slew his brother on the diabolical principle of envy; because his works were more righteous than his own. Infidelity, whether in Jews or Heathens, hath always acted the same part. Let any person consider the treatment of the prophets and messengers of God, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the ten dreadful persecutions of the Christian Church, and the persecution of Christians by one another since the age of the Reformation, and then let him judge, whether the *feet* of men are *swift to shed blood;* especially the blood of the innocent? But all this it may be said was the effect of superstition, which hath always been bloody minded;

be it so; yet it is equally to be lamented, that so baneful a weed should thrive so naturally in the human heart. However, let superstition be out of the question, and we shall discover another principle, equally pernicious and more irrational; even the principle of *honour,* as it is called. This directs men to commit homicide upon the slightest provocation; coolly, deliberately, and soberly; according to rules received, approved, established: from which no man in a certain rank of life must depart, but at the hazard of his character, and all that is most valuable. If this is the principle of those who call themselves *the world,* then the world by its own confession is guilty of the charge which the Apostle hath brought against them. They are not only ready to shed blood, but *swift* to do it; the most trifling cause, a word, a phantom, a shadow (even the honour of those who have no honour) will provoke them to it; their passions will be excited to a blood-thirstiness superior to that of the lion or the tiger. For these beasts, as we are told, will rather seize a brute than a man, if they have the choice of both; but this false *honour,* like a demon that delights in unnatural sacrifices, is satisfied with nothing less than *human blood.*

If men are subject to the influence of such principles, we shall not wonder at what is said of them in the next place—*destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known.* Deceit and envy, wrath and hatred, ambition and concupiscence, with nothing to restrain them but worldly policy, which more frequently sets them all in motion, must needs have made wild work, and produced *destruction* and *misery* in every age. What is the civil history of man, but a register of the various operations of these pernicious principles? If we look

back, and survey any particular people in their state of barbarism, we find them perpetually at war with one another; dividing themselves into a multitude of little independent principalities, with separate interests; defrauding and plundering one another; subsisting rather by rapine and the sword, than by the profitable and peaceable arts of tillage *. Such were the people whom *Julius Cæsar* found in *Britain*, fencing and intrenching themselves in their habitations, that they might be secure from robbery and murder †. And if we take another view of men, as they approach to a state of civilization, there we find pride prevailing as the universal passion which sets the world on fire. We see the bastard governments of *Greece* and *Rome*, in which there was an eternal struggle for liberty, a balancing of factions, a perpetual searching for that philosopher's stone in politics, a state of such a form, that all might govern, and none be governed: But it could never be found: yet they, who knew not the way of peace, were weak enough to keep this always in view, as the first and greatest object to men in society;

* In Gallia non solum in omnibus civitatibus atque pagis partibusque, sed pene etiam in singulis domibus factiones sunt. *Cæs. de Bell. Gall.* lib. vi. §. 10.

Aliquod bellum fere quotannis accidere solebat, uti aut ipsi injurias inferrent, aut illatas propulsarent. Ibid. §. 14.

Civitatibus maxima laus est, quam latissimas circum se vastatis finibus solitudines habere. Hoc proprium virtutis existimant, expulsos agris finitimos cedere, neque quenquam prope se audere consistere. Simul hoc se fore tutiores arbitrantur, repentino incursionis timore sublato. Ibid. §. 22.

† Oppidum autem Britanni vocant, quum silvas impeditas vallo atque fossâ munierunt, quo, incursionis hostium vitandæ causâ, convenire consueverunt. Ibid. lib. v. §. 21.

The natives of America, (I mean the native Indians, who are still in that state in which the Europeans found them,) spend their time in war and hunting.

and hence the state was beaten to pieces between the contentions of the upper and lower orders, like a vessel upon a sea where the wind and tide are contrary to each other.

We are now arrived at the concluding article of the human character—*There is no fear of God before their eyes.* They persist in a course of sin and error without remorse; as if there were no God to survey the actions of men now, and to require an account of them hereafter. At the end of all their ungodliness, the *terrors of the Lord* are planted, but they look not upon them: they hasten as a bird into an hidden snare, and know not that it is for their lives. The wrath of God hath often been revealed from heaven, and fearful punishments have been inflicted upon ungodly people; yet the impression wears away: the Author of such visitations is forgotten; the causes of them are misrepresented by the application of some false philosophy: and so the sinner renders them of no effect to his soul. Every man who opposes the divine Will, is in the situation of the perverse *Balaam;* the Angel of the Lord stands in the way before him with a drawn sword, ready to cut him in sunder; but his eyes are holden by a spirit of unbelief, and he has no sense of his danger. Instead of turning back from the wrong path, his heart is fixed only on the gratification of his present desires; and if he is arrived at the last stage of wickedness, then his conscience will afford no aid when it warns him of the vengeance that awaits him; but will be beaten in a paroxysm of fury, and spurred up against the face of judgment.

Such is the condition of the *natural man* in consequence of the fall; these are the defects and miseries of his character. No sort of crime hath here been represented, to which he is not subject, as the lusts

of his own heart, inflamed and assisted by the temptations of the Devil, draw away and entice him. But it doth not follow from hence, that every sensual man must be guilty of every possible crime, only because it is the fruit of his nature : this is no necessary consequence. For *death* is also the fruit of our nature ; yet all men do not die of the same distemper ; neither did any man ever die of all distempers at once ; though some cases of mortality, like some instances of guilt, are exceedingly complicated. In different persons sin and mortality have various appearances, according to the difference of constitutions, circumstances, and accidents. On the whole it appears, that as man is by nature mortal, he is by nature sinful. His mortality is known and allowed by all, and no man ever dreamed of denying it. His sinfulness is as real, though the subject is not so popular. In this respect the prince and the beggar, the learned and the ignorant, are all upon a level. Let the most splendid pedigree be carried far enough backward, and it comes at last to Adam and Eve, who are the common parents of all men, and who have delivered the same nature to all their posterity.

CHAPTER II.

THE REDEMPTION OF MAN FROM SIN BY THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

All that has been said in the foregoing chapter will be confirmed, from a consideration of man's redemption by the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross. That the genuine fruits of man's nature are such as we have recounted, and that St. *Paul*, in the passages collected from the Old Testament, hath given a true representation of them, is not only proved by experience and observation, but is also clear from hence; in that they are the sins for which Christ suffered, that our nature might be redeemed, and the justice of God satisfied. His sufferings were of such a sort, and were so ordained by the providence of God, as to carry in them all the marks of that sinfulness of man's nature which gave occasion to them.

Thus for want of understanding which is in the mind of man, his mind was filled with sorrow and dejection: his head was pierced with thorns, for the wickedness and vanity of our imaginations. Because we had departed from the right way, and had turned from our dependence upon God; God in the hour of his distress departed from him, withdrawing that divine comfort, which had supported him under the bo-

dily trials of the cross. For our pride and aspiring to be above what God had made us, He left that glory which was natural to him, and condescended to assume the lowest character upon earth: he was mocked at and insulted as a pretended king, rejected as an alien, despised as an outcast, and numbered with condemned malefactors. He was stripped naked at the time of his sufferings, that he might take upon himself the shame of Adam's guilt: He was executed on a cross of wood, which is called the *Tree** of his Cross, to remind us of that fatal tree, which brought sin and death into the world: he was tried with an agony in a garden, and was at last buried in a garden; to shew that his death proceeded from the offence of man in Paradise. Because our *mouth is filled with cursing and bitterness,* his mouth was filled with vinegar and bitter gall, at a time when they were most distasteful, while he was fainting under the weight of his sorrows and sufferings. Our hands having been used as the instruments of sin, his hands were pierced with nails; his feet were torn and wounded, and fixed through to the cross, as if, like our feet, they had been *swift to shed blood.* Thus was the iniquity of us all laid on him, according to the strictest law of retaliation: the justice of God inflicted punishment upon him, where sin had manifested itself in us; and this, I presume, in more respects than we are able to shew. The image of the first Adam, with all its depravity, was crucified in him, and as the Apostle rightly instructs us, the *body of sin,* from head to foot, *was destroyed*†. There is such a correspondence between the ways of God and the doctrine of the Scripture, that they mutually

* Gal. iii. 13.—1 Pet. ii. 24. † Rom. vi. 6.

llustrate and confirm one another. When Christ suffered for the sins of the world, he suffered in such a sort, as to shew, that he took upon himself the character of a natural man; and therefore the natural man really is *such in himself* as the Redeemer *appeared to be* for his sake. None but fools will deny this; and no wise man can hear of it, without praying to God, that he would deliver us from this *body of sin*, that is, from ourselves; that we being new creatures, may serve him in newness of life to his glory and our own salvation.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW CREATURE IN CHRISTIANITY.

In the course of my enquiry, my first endeavour was to make it appear, that man is by nature *unrighteous;* and, after the example and method of the blessed Apostle St. Paul, I have pointed out all those particulars in which this unrighteousness is found to consist. This account has been confirmed, by its correspondence with the sufferings of Christ on the cross; whose afflictions and death were of such a form, as to refer us back to the sinfulness of the nature for which he suffered. And now, in the last place, to clear this matter as far as possible, it may be shewn, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a system, accommodated, in all its parts, to *this* unrighteousness of *human nature;* and applying itself professedly to all those evils which have been described and insisted upon in the foregoing chapters. The Christian religion, in every step it takes for the salvation of man, presupposes the *fall* of Adam, and the permanent *effects* of it in all his posterity. Medicines are accommodated to the nature of the diseases which they are designed to cure; so

that from the medicines themselves, if prescribed by a skilful person, and according to the rules of his art, the symptoms of the disease may be inferred. Thus much, however, is always certain, that when a *medicine* is *provided*, a *distemper* is *supposed;* and that he who stands in need of a *cure*, can be no other than a *sick man*. All the several alteratives and restoratives which the Gospel has provided, serve to convince us, in the first place, that we are sick by nature: upon any other supposition the Gospel is an absurdity; as undertaking to do that for all men, of which no man hath any need. Therefore, if the Gospel is a consistent scheme, the remedies therein offered demonstrate, that the *soul* of man is in a state of sin and blindness; as plainly as medicinal drugs and instruments of surgery shew that his *body* is frail and mortal.

These remedies, with their properties and applications, are the things we are now to consider; and a slight examination will make it evident, that they are all adapted to the evils of man's constitution, as described by the Apostle, and consequently for the producing of a new creature.

It was first asserted in this description, that *there is none righteous;* which assertion is the same for substance with what the holy Psalmist had said in his supplication—*Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified* *. To obviate this, the Gospel, in opposition to the *ministration of condemnation* by the law of Moses, is called the *ministration of righteousness* †; bringing us to that justification in the sight of God to which no man living can restore himself. It brings about this change, by admitting us to be members of Christ, who is called

* Psalm cxliii. 2. † 2 Cor. iii. 9.

the *Lord our Righteousness:* that instead of being considered as we are in ourselves, we may be *accepted in the beloved,* who is the *first-born among many brethren.* So that the Apostle asks, and teaches us to triumph in the same question—*who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again:* who died to make satisfaction for the sins of the world, and rose again to shew that it was accepted: so that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* As surely as many, according to the state of nature, *were made sinners by one man's disobedience;* so surely also *by the obedience of one are many made righteous.* Thus abundantly is the evil of *unrighteousness* provided against.

The next thing in order is the renovation of the *understanding.* Of the *old man* it was said, *there is none that understandeth;* but the new man is said to be *renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him**.—When God changes us from natural into spiritual men, he restores the spiritual powers of discernment, which we lost by the fall; and in which the image of God consisted. As the sight of the mind is now dark by nature, God is said to *enlighten the eyes of the understanding*†: and as the eyes are shut to spiritual things, Christ is therefore said to have *opened the understanding* of his disciples, that they might *understand the Scriptures.* The Psalmist speaks as one sensible of this defect—*Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law:* whence it follows, that a man, whom God hath enlightened, sees some things in the Scripture, of which that man

* Col. iii. 10. † Eph. i. 18.

can have no understanding, who views it with the eyes of *nature*. Sometimes this principle is called *faith;* which is a divine sense superinduced to the senses of nature : it signifies a right apprehension of God, a love of his wisdom, a trust in his promises, and an expectation of the world to come. This principle is the gift of God; and they who are blessed with it are of one mind; but they who have it not are always jarring and disputing about the plainest things, and will be so to the world's end.

But God doth not only renew the mind, and restore the right use of the understanding : he also supplies true matter to it. He reveals to us the knowledge of himself, the true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sanctifier of Men. *" The Son of God hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true:"* therefore till he gives us this understanding, we have no knowledge of any proper object of adoration. Besides the true notion of God's being, the Bible opens to us the ways of his providence in the government of the world, and the wonders of redemption in the salvation of his Church by Jesus Christ, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

But still there is no right understanding, without a proper rule of action : therefore we have such a rule offered to us in the commandments of the law, and in the precepts of the Gospel, by which all the colours of vice and virtue are properly distinguished; so that the Christian is delivered from that miserable folly to which all the world is subject, of confounding good and evil, and putting one for the other. On these considerations, we may subscribe to those divine words of Solomon—*The Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up*

sound wisdom for the righteous; he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path *.

This leads us to the next article, the *error* of our way. All men are *out of their way,* and the gospel undertakes to put them into it.—They are represented as wandering in a pathless wilderness, such as this world is to all those who are not under the direction of God; but in this wilderness, he that led the Israelites from Egypt makes a path so plain and direct, that the *wayfaring men, though fools* (though never so simple in the estimation of the world,) *cannot err therein.* So far as we have followed the dictates of nature, we have erred and strayed from that right way, which leads to God, and the happiness of his kingdom; in which capacity we are compared to *lost sheep,* whom Christ came to *seek* and *save.* Such as are willing to be found, are conducted by him to the Father; and he himself becomes a new and living *way* to them, by means of the doctrine which he taught; by his death, which opened to them the kingdom of heaven; by his life, which serves as an example to direct them thither, and by his Spirit leading and supporting them; so that if this way be kept in view, they cannot fail of attaining their end, even the salvation of their souls.

Then again, instead of that *unsound speech,* which is the effusion of the natural man, the Gospel dictates a new sort of speech, agreeable to the doctrines of grace, and *seasoned* with *salt,* to preserve it from *corruption.* When a man is reformed from that hateful condition of the *open sepulchre,* no *filthy communica-*

* Prov. ii. 6, &c.

tion proceeds out of his mouth; but such only as *becometh a saint,* and may *minister grace to the hearers.* If the man himself is holy, his speech will be holy; it will agree with the purity of that doctrine which is laid up in his heart. He is no longer a *sepulchre,* defiled with death; but an earthen vessel, inclosing the inestimable treasure of divine grace: a lamp, instead of a grave, sending forth the odours of incense in his prayers; which the angels of heaven will present before the throne of God. His tongue is cleared of its native poison, and instead of spreading discord, becomes an instrument of peace: all cursing, and bitterness, and malice is put away from him; he blesseth, *and curseth not.*

That blood-thirstiness of wild beasts, which is common to the men of this world (not excepting those whom courtesy calls *gentle*), is no longer found in the true Christian. His *feet,* instead of being *swift to shed blood,* are *shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.* He is taught, that it is far more honourable in the sight of God to forgive an injury, than to revenge it. True greatness of mind is necessary to the one act, and very low qualities (to speak the best of them) will suffice for the other. A proud man is impatient, unless all others have as good an opinion of him as he has of himself; but he who has been accustomed to humble himself privately in the sight of God, will grow indifferent to the censure and praises of men.

The unmortified passions of mankind fill the world with *destruction and misery;* the proper work of those who are governed by them, is to destroy others and to disquiet themselves. But how different a state of things would begin to shew itself, if the generality of men in civil society were influenced by the spirit of Christianity!—For this inspires a love of justice and

mercy; it delights in protecting and saving; it humbles itself, to exalt others; and having the best claim to the blessing of God, it is prospered in its undertakings, receives present enjoyment in this world, and is happy in the expectation of a better. As the empire of sin and death increases, misery never fails to keep equal pace with it. What is it but the prosecution of vain desires, and the clashing of interests and appetites, which creates all the misery men inflict upon one another? How ready are they to complain of the world as a scene of trouble: and what makes it such, but the abuse of it, by those who neither fear God nor know themselves? Let but the rules of the Gospel take effect, and the world would soon be a very different place: but (as many are called, and few chosen,) individuals only can experience the ease and freedom of Christian principles; and this but imperfectly, for want of that universal consent, which never can be hoped for, so long as *the majority are evil**.

It is sufficiently proved by the testimony of history, that no unenlightened nation ever understood *the way of peace;* but rather adopted and gloried in such a policy, as could be supported only by hostility and depredation.—Christ therefore appeared to the world as the *Prince of peace;* reconciling man to God, and men to one another. It was predicted of them in the figurative language of the prophet Isaiah, that when they should walk in the light of the Lord, they should *beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; that nation should not lift up sword against nation, neither should they learn war any more:* that the profitable arts of tillage, and a life of innocent labour, should be substituted in the place

* Οι πλειους κακοι. Bias.

of war. But *religious* peace is of much more value than political; this, therefore, of all other virtues, is the most strongly recommended by the Gospel; insomuch that the exercise of it is made the test of our profession; and without it, all the benefits of our religion are forfeited. Our blessed Master hath taught us, that peace is his own peculiar gift; that it could be had only from him; and, therefore, he bequeathed it as a legacy to his disciples *.

The last defect to which the Gospel applies itself, is that unhappy absence of the *fear of God*, for want of which unbelievers are insensible of their danger. But with us the case is altered: our eyes are opened to see and to avoid those *terrors*, which are the certain rewards of disobedience. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;* and who that knows this can persevere in a state of sin? The expectation of future judgment, and a sense of the Divine presence, are necessary to form the conscience of a Christian; for without these, men have no conscience at all. The holy Scripture teaches us to *set the Lord always before us*, in every thing we do, or speak, or think; to be sensible, that the eyes of our future Judge are now upon us, every moment observing the motions of our minds, and noting our most secret actions.—This persuasion is our best security; it will keep us from turning aside to the paths of vice; and, by stirring us up to vigilance and severity toward our own conduct, will be the means of delivering us, through the all-sufficient merits of Christ, from that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, which is to come upon every soul of man that doeth evil.

* John xiv. 27.

Such are the remedies which the Gospel has applied to all the evils of nature; therefore it follows, that these evils are not imaginary, but real in themselves, and common to all mankind. It is on this basis that we ground the perfection and consistency of the system of redemption, as set forth in the Gospel. If it offer righteousness to us, what can follow, but that man is by nature born in unrighteousness? If it offer us understanding, it supposes us ignorant; if it direct us into the way, it supposes us out of the way; if it provide the restraints of peace for our feet, it supposes them swift to shed blood; if it purify our speech, it finds it filthy and corrupt; if it inspire charity and brotherly union, it finds us at enmity and variance; *hateful, and hating one another;* if it suggest to us the fear of God, it finds us insensible of his presence, and fearless of his judgment. The argument is so plain, and the inference so obvious, that it is needless to insist upon it any farther. I shall therefore proceed to some few observations, to which the subject naturally directs us.

And first, the fall of man, and the consequent depravity of human nature, should never be out of sight, when we attempt to justify the Christian scheme, or undertake to explain any Christian doctrines. The Bible begins with it professedly; pointing out the wiles of the devil, and bringing in the Saviour for no other end but to counterwork the destroyer in his two great works of *sin* and *death.* They who remain in the state in which the fall left them, are called his children; and it is their pleasure to propagate that sin and death which their father introduced. As he was a liar from the beginning, so they are liars, against God as well as man; he was a murderer, and they are murderers; he was a tempter, a deceiver, a subtle ser-

pent, a devouring lion; and their works, like his, abound with deceit, enmity, subtlety, avarice, and rapacity. There have been two opposite parties from the beginning, the *sons of God,* and the *seed of the serpent.* Their opinions are contrary, and their works contrary. Christianity is at the head of one party, and Infidelity at the head of the other. As time is divided between light and darkness, so is the world divided between these two. The dispute between them has subsisted through all ages past, it is now in agitation, and it grows hotter every day; it will never cease, till the consummation, when the Judge of men and angels shall interpose to decide it.

To this true state of things the Gospel is adapted; the religion proper for man must be built upon the history of man; as the best account of natural causes must be drawn from the history of nature; all the rest is but sophistry and delusion. The clergy especially, who are so often called upon to heal the distempers of the soul, should be well acquainted with its history and constitution; and the science is as requisite to them, as the anatomy of the human frame is to a common physician.

And now, if the fall of man is really the leading fact, to which our faith is adapted; what a preposterous, unnatural, useless, dangerous system of religion must that be, which either omits, or denies it! The scheme of Deism, which calls itself *Natural Religion,* is this very system. For the fall of man is a fact, which (though reason and experience may easily justify it when known) uninformed reason cannot find out; therefore the religion of nature takes no notice of it, but proceeds as if man were now in the state in which the Creator left him. *Corruption* and *renovation* are the two articles which run through every

branch of our faith; but natural religion has neither of these. The salvation of man is the result of the triumph of Jesus Christ over Satan: natural religion knows nothing of either party. Our whole life here upon earth is a struggle against temptation from the powers of darkness, under which the grace of God only is able to support us; but natural religion says not one word either of grace or temptation. So that upon the whole, if there is a doctrine among Christians, which can render their whole creed ineffectual and impertinent, it is this, that *religion* (properly so called) is *natural* to man: from whence the inferences are obvious, that nature has been encroaching upon religion, and undermining civil society, ever since its claims were set on foot by some speculative divines, and taken up on their authority by the Deists. How we shall get back again from nature to Christianity, God Almighty knows! The progress is *up* hill, and therefore difficult and doubtful. The case of the Heathens at the propagation of Christianity was not nearly so bad as that of Christians relapsed, by this road, into infidelity. *They* saw and confessed, that nature had carried them into error and misery: that they were become fools by pretending to be wise: and so they were glad to take a better guide. But when men have taken the blind guide as the best of all, and think they can see every thing by their own light; they will go on in their own way till it is too late to turn back. All we can do, with hope of success, is to warn others not to follow them.

The clergy of this church are admonished by the canons, to preach against Popery four times in a year; but if they were now to preach *forty* times in a year against this modern religion of nature, it might be more to the purpose.

Moralists, then, may boast of their dignity as they please: our religion is made for men who have *lost their dignity;* and it will succeed only upon those who *glory in their infirmities,* and determine to *know nothing but Christ crucified.* He who sets up his dignity, independent of revelation and divine grace, hath forgotten that he was *baptized;* and hath invented a new Gospel, as subversive of the old, as the vain traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees were subversive of the Mosaic Law. The wise men of this world (as they think and call themselves) err grossly upon this subject; giving us representations of human nature, as much differing from fact, as the scenery of pastoral, with all the artificial ornaments of poetry, differs from the ignorance and rusticity of real life. In this our modern reasoners are condemned by the Heathens, who have left us true and striking descriptions of human corruption. They never pretended that their *religion* was *natural:* their gods *were traditional;* they were the *gods of their fathers;* they signified the different powers of the created world; and their whole ritual was a system of *expiation* by *sacrifice,* such as natural religion never owned nor thought of. Let scholars consider this fact *.

* Heathens did not allow of a light of nature as a sufficient guide in religion or civil life: and their writings abound with testimonies of its insufficiency and corruption.

Nec natura potest justo secernere iniquum.

Hor. Sat. lib. i. 3.

Ποτερον ουν παντες πινουσι τον πλανον η ου; παντες πινουσιν, εφη. "Do all mankind drink of the cup of error when they come into life? Yea, said he, they *all* drink of it." *Cebes* in Tab.

Αθανατους μεν πρωτα θεους, νομω ως διακειται
Τιμα————

"Worship the immortal *gods* as it is laid down by the law." However we take this precept, which is as it were the *first command-*

Another observation which occurs is this; that if children are born in sin, and nature has this propensity to evil, parents and teachers may thence understand, how absolutely necessary it is for them to begin their instructions *early;* to bend nature, while it is tender and will yield to correction: for the sin that is bred in them will grow, if it be neglected, as fast as they grow; its seeds will strike deep root into the soil: and afterwards, when you *would* sow the seeds of godliness, you find the ground occupied (past all recovery) with the weeds of nature.

Lastly, as the origin of evil is a question which has tortured the wits of men in all ages, let this consideration satisfy us, that God has *permitted evil* for the sake only of *greater good:* that his attributes and divine powers could never have been understood and admired by us, if they had not been opened by that scheme of redemption, in which *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Never let us torment ourselves with asking the question—"could not God have prevented the fall of man?" Thus the Jews ignorantly reasoned about the death of Lazarus—"*could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that this man should not have died?*" To be sure he could; but the glory of God, and the instruction of mankind, were better secured by his death, than they could have been by his preservation. Therefore Christ said of his sickness, *this sickness is not unto death;* it hath not happened

ment of heathenism, nothing can be found in it like what is *now* called natural religion. For, if νομος, *law*, here signifies the law of *nature*, then they held *polytheism* to be *natural:* if it means the common law of cities and kingdoms, then it puts all men under the traditionary worship of their country, and refers them only to the *gods of their fathers.*

that death may be at the end of it, *but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.* Lazarus died, that Jesus might raise him up; and man is fallen, that God may be glorified in his restoration. Here every wise and good man will rest; this consideration is sufficient for us at present; and as for those deep counsels of God into which we are now not able to penetrate, let us trust, that they will be farther revealed to us in a better state. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

THE

BOOK OF NATURE;

OR,

THE TRUE SENSE OF THINGS,

EXPLAINED AND MADE EASY

TO THE

CAPACITIES OF CHILDREN.

IN TWO PARTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *first part* of the following work is extant in a *French* translation; and may be purchased, for the use of such young people as are learning that language, with the English, at Messrs. *Robinson's*, Paternoster-row.

To Mrs. W——, of G——.

Madam,

I have been looking out for some good mother, who takes delight in the education of her own children, and is capable of teaching them in a proper manner.

I have long wished to see what effect it will have upon the understandings of children, if we teach them knowledge, (especially the knowledge of the Scripture) by *things* instead of *words;* and I find you a proper person to make the experiment for me.

With this view I send you a little book of Lessons, which is my first essay on this new plan of instruction. I cannot recommend it to you as a regular system, because I have taken my several subjects as they happened to present themselves to my thoughts. But if my principle is right, you will soon find the good effects of it. If it should fail, I shall rest satisfied, that with such a mother, and such children, it has had a fair trial.

I recommend you and them, and my own endeavours, to the blessing of God.

PREFACE.

In my Lectures on the *Figurative Language of the Scripture*, I hazarded the following assertion in favour of its usefulness: "So plain is this sort of teaching, and so effectual, that if I were "to begin with the first elements of instruction to a child, I "would teach this ideal language, in preference to all the lan- "guages in the world; for this is the life and soul of all the "rest." In this little work, I have partly executed the plan which my mind then suggested to me; under an assurance, that it will raise the curiosity of young people, and prepare their understanding for the reading of those Lectures; on the matter of which my mind had been working for more than twenty years before I could persuade myself that I was fit to write upon it; and when they who learn this book shall have learned that, I shall have nothing farther to expect of them. The language of the Word of God will then be opened to their minds, and the matter of it will have fixed itself in their affections: and when they shall be advanced and settled in life, they will teach it their own children, as I have taught them; for where this sort of wisdom hath once entered, it will never be lost or neglected; and he that values it for his own use, will have delight in communicating it to others.

To the Clergy of this Church I shall not *prescribe;* but, as a faithful brother, I will promise them, that in teaching the younger part of their flock, they will soon see a happy effect, if they will condescend to teach according to the rule I have followed in this book. Other books teach a grammar of *words:* but this is the grammar of *things;* to be *conceived* by the *ima-*

gination, and *applied* by the *understanding*, for the improvement of the *heart* in divine and moral wisdom. It is all after the pattern of that plain and forcible style of preaching and reasoning, which first confounded the Jews, and enlightened the Gentiles; and which will even now raise up converts to the Christian Faith, and support them in the same, against all the seducing efforts of infidelity.

NAYLAND, *May* 1, 1792.

INTRODUCTION.

As the ear heareth *words*, so doth the mind understand *things;* and hence there is a language of the mind, which teaches some things from the nature of other things. While we are learning to read, we think we have got all we want when the book becomes easy: but there is still another language, by which we are to get wisdom in a higher and a shorter way.

All children are delighted with pictures: but they do not know that the whole world is a picture, and that all the things we see with our eyes speak something to the mind, to instruct and improve it.

When we know something of this language, then we may think ourselves able to read like men and Christians. It cannot be explained but by shewing what it is; and then it will speak for itself: But as neither children nor men can get wisdom without the help of God, we must pray to Him, that we may hear and understand; for *the seeing eye, and the hearing ear, the Lord hath made even both of them.*

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THE

BOOK OF NATURE,

PART I.

LESSON I.

THE BEASTS.

The ass hath very long ears, and yet he hath no sense of music, but brayeth with a frightful noise. He is obstinate and unruly, and will go his own way, even though he is severely beaten. The child, who will not be taught, is but little better; he has no delight in learning, but talketh of his own folly, and disturbeth others with his noise.

The dog barketh all the night long, and thinks it no trouble to rob honest people of their rest.

The fox is a cunning thief: and men, when they do not fear God, are crafty and deceitful. The wolf is cruel and blood-thirsty. As he devoureth the lamb, so do bad men oppress and tear the innocent and helpless.

The adder is a poisonous snake, and hath a forked double tongue; so do men speak lies, and utter slander against their neighbours, when *the poison of asps is under their lips.* The devil, who deceiveth with lies, and would destroy all mankind, is the *old serpent,*

who brought death into the world by the venom of his bite. He would kill me, and all the children that are born, if God would let him; but Jesus Christ came to save us from his power, and to *destroy the works of the devil.*

Lord, thou hast made me a man for thy service: O let me not dishonour thy work, by turning myself into the likeness of some evil beast: Let me not be as the fox, who is a thief and a robber: let me never be cruel, as a wolf, to any of thy creatures; especially to my dear fellow-creatures, and my dearer fellow-Christians; but let me be harmless as the lamb; quiet and submissive as the sheep; that so I may be fit to live, and be fed in thy pasture, under the good shepherd, Jesus Christ. It is far better to be the poorest of his flock, than to be proud and cruel, as the lion or the tiger, who go about seeking what they may devour.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is the child who will not learn?

A. An ass, which is ignorant and unruly.

Q. What are wicked men, who hurt and cheat others?

A. They are wolves, and foxes, and blood-thirsty lions.

Q. What are ill-natured people, who trouble their neighbours, and rail at them?

A. They are dogs, who bark at every body.

Q. But what are good and peaceable people?

A. They are harmless sheep: and little children, under the grace of God, are innocent lambs.

Q. But what are liars?

A. They are snakes and vipers, with double tongues and poison under their lips.

Q. Who is the good shepherd?

A. Jesus Christ.

THE TEXTS.

Prov. xxvi. 3. *A bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.* See also Job xi. 12.

Acts xx. 29. *Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

Luke xiii. 32. *Go tell that fox.*

Psalm x. 9. *He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den, to catch the poor.*

Psalm xxii. 16. *Many dogs have compassed me about.*

Matt. x. 16. *I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.*

Isa. xl. 11. *He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.*

Mark x. 13. 16. *And they brought young children to him, and he took them up in his arms.*

Matt. iii. 7. *He said unto the Pharisees and Sadducees, O generation of vipers.*

Gen. iii. 14. *And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Thou art cursed above every beast of the field.*

Rev. iii. 9. *That old serpent, called the Devil and Satan.*

LESSON II.

THE EEL AND THE LARK.

THE eel buries itself in the mud. What a poor nasty life it leads! The lark mounts up towards hea-

ven, and delights itself with sweet music to the praise of its great Creator. Who would not wish to lead the life of a lark?

But then, the lark can work as well as sing: it is never idle; none of the good creatures of God are permitted to live and do nothing. It flies about to feed itself; and when the earth is covered with frost and snow in the winter, it runs about upon the cold ground, and takes great pains to find a small living to keep it from starving. In the summer it makes its nest, and brings up its young. All creatures submit with cheerfulness to the laws of God, but unruly man; who becomes his own tormentor by resisting them; for nothing can make us happy but the laws of God, which are all intended for that purpose. There are many very bad men, who will neither feed their poor families, nor work for themselves, nor sing praises to God, but turn sottish and foolish, and bury themselves in the mud like the eel, or wallow in the mire like the swine. But God hath made me to be like the lark; to find my pleasure and my health in necessary business and profitable learning. What a sad thing it would be, if I should ever forsake the life of that little sweet innocent creature, to drown my senses in eating and drinking, or waste my precious time in sleep and idleness, or consume my substance with gaming and keeping ill company! Let me learn a better lesson from the little lark; for God hath made larks to teach us what we ought to be; and he hath made swine and wolves, and bats and owls, to teach us what we ought not to be. The lark loves the day-light; it sings before the sun rises; it is always busy and at work. But owls fly from the sun, and love darkness, and make a frightful hooting and screaming, which does not inspire us either with mirth or devotion, as the hea-

venly music of the lark doth; but rather fills the mind with terror and despair; and was thought of old to forebode some mischief or calamity.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. How do the lives of worldly men differ from the lives of Christians?

A. As the life of the eel differs from the life of the lark.

Q. What is the delight of Christians?

A. To praise God.

Q. Does the lark spend all its time in praising God?

A. No, it labours for its living; and we also must do the necessary business of life.

Q. Are all creatures obedient to the Creator?

A. They all follow the laws he hath given them.

Q. What is the man who disobeys the laws of God?

A. A monster unlike to all other creatures.

Q. For what end did God make the lark and the dove?

A. To teach us what we ought to be.

Q. Why did he make owls, bats, and swine?

A. To teach us what we ought not to be.

THE TEXTS.

Prov. xi. 12. *Whatsoever hath no fins or scales in the water, that shall be an abomination unto you.*

Psalm civ. 12. *Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation, and sing among the branches.*

Jam. v. 13. *Is any merry? Let him sing Psalms.*

Lev. xi. 13. *These are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls—the owl and the bat.*

2 Pet. ii. 22. *The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.*

LESSON III.

THE SHIPS ON THE SEA.

The ships sail upon the great and wide sea, whose waves roar; and are tossed about by the winds when the storm blows. Some set out from the land with a fair wind, and with the sun shining upon their sails and colours: but after a while they are driven amongst rocks and shoals; or the great waves of the deep rising upon them like mountains, swallow them up; and the poor people on board are drowned and perish.

The like dangers attend us though we live upon the land; for, alas! we carry seas and storms within us! *The wicked are like the troubled sea, which can never rest, but casteth up mire and dirt.* The quiet spirit of a good man, is like the clear water of the fountain; but the restless mind is like the dirty waves of the sea, when the mire of the bottom is stirred up by their motion.

Our wicked passions, such as pride, wrath, and envy, disturb our hearts, as the winds which blow upon the sea; and nothing can quiet them but the word and grace of Jesus Christ, who spake to the raging waves, and commanded them to be still. So can he now command our restless spirits, and restore them to peace; so that there shall be a calm within us.

O how lamentable is the case of those, who perish in the storm of their own passions! If they had learned to govern them in time, they might have been saved from ruin. Perhaps, they came into this world the heirs of wealth and honour, with a fair and pleasant estate, and a fine house provided for them; and were under the care of good parents, who instructed them to be wise and happy; and so they might have continued: but pride rose within them, and carried them aloft upon the waves towards the clouds; pleasure transported them into a dangerous sea; then their vices brought them to ruin, and they sunk down to the bottom with despair. Thus were they tossed about like a ship in a storm, till they were swallowed up and lost. Temptation is a rock on which many souls spilt, and are shipwrecked.

How shall we escape the dangers of this world, the storms of this troublesome ocean, to which we are all exposed, but in the ark of Christ's church, in which the faithful are saved, as the family of Noah were saved when the world was drowned for its wickedness?

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is man's life through this troublesome world?

A. As a dangerous passage over the waves of the sea.

Q. What are the rocks and shallows which threaten us with shipwreck?

A. Temptations and worldly pleasures.

Q. What are the winds that toss us about?

A. Our own violent passions.

Q. What can quiet them?

A. Nothing but the grace of God, and the command of Christ.

Q. How is that to be obtained?

A. We must cry to him as his disciples did, when they were ready to sink in a storm.

Q. How was Noah saved from the waters?

A. In an ark.

Q. And what is the ark in which we are to be saved?

A. The Church of Christ.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm cvii. 26. *They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.*

Isa. lvii. 20. *The wicked are like the troubled sea.*

Jude, 13. *Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.*

James i. 6. *He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.*

Matt. viii. 26. *Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.*

1 Pet. iii. 20. *Eight souls were saved by water; the like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us.*

LESSON IV.

THE BUTTERFLY.

The butterfly spreads its wings, and the sun shines upon its plumes! See how the wisdom of the Creator hath adorned it with beautiful lines, and painted it with glorious colours. It flies about, and finds the plant which is proper to feed its brood of caterpillars; and there it lays its eggs to be hatched by the

sun. In their infant state they crawl about as helpless worms, and feed upon green leaves. Then they fold themselves up in a case like a coffin, where they lie, as it were asleep, till the time of their change; when they break this covering, and come forth with wings and feathers, like painted birds, to fly about the air, and sip the dew of the fields and meadows, and visit every sweet and pleasant flower.

So am I now like the poor infant worms crawling about upon this earth. But if I go on in the ways of God, I shall at length be changed from a worm into an angel. But first I must be shut up in the grave, and hide myself in the state of death, till my change shall come. Then shall I be raised to life and liberty, and put on a spiritual body, and be able to visit and enjoy all the wonders of God's works, such as poor helpless mortals cannot now see nor understand. O let me not forfeit this expectation, for the sake of such low enjoyments as caterpillars are capable of!

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. How are the eggs of the butterfly hatched?

A. The sun raises them to life.

Q. What are they at first?

A. Poor helpless worms that crawl about.

Q. What becomes of them next?

A. They are hid in a shell like a coffin, where they sleep as if they were dead.

Q. And what do they come to at last?

A. They come to life with wings and feathers of many glorious colours.

Q. And what are we in this present world?

A. We are as worms creeping upon the earth.

Q. And what do we hope to come to at last?

A. We shall be raised from the chambers of death, and become like angels.

THE TEXTS.

Job xxv. 6. *Man that is a worm.*

Isa. xxvi. 19, 20. *Come my people, enter into thy chambers—hide thyself as it were for a little moment.*

Psalm lxxviii. 13. *Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold.*

LESSON V.

THE FADING FLOWER.

To-day the flower bloweth, and spreadeth forth its leaves, and we admire its beauty, but its glory is short; for it soon fadeth, and falleth away to the ground. I am like this flower, frail and mortal; and I must not value myself for any thing I am, or any thing I have in this life; for if I were never so great and noble, I must fade as a flower, and be withered as the grass. Where are they now, who were once the great and the honourable of the earth? as the scythe cutteth down the grass, so hath death swept them away. But short-lived as the flower is, God provideth for it, and covereth it with a raiment, such as Solomon in all his glory did not wear. Therefore, if God so clothe a fading flower, which is made but for a day, he will never neglect me, who am made for eternity. He will provide for all my bodily wants; and which is much more, he will cover my naked and sinful soul,

that it may be fit to appear in his sight. He hath given to me in my baptism that best robe, the robe of righteousness, which shall never change, but keep its glory like the sun which fadeth not. Lord, grant that I may keep unspotted the garment thou hast put upon my soul; that, when I have put off my body, I may still wear this best robe, and at length put on immortality both in body and soul, at the resurrection of the just. Blessed are the poor whom God hath clothed: but woe to the rich, if he hath sent them naked and empty away.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is all the glory of man in this life?

A. It is a flower that fadeth.

Q. But what do you expect, when you consider the beautiful colours with which the flower is clothed?

A. That God, who clothed the flower finer than king Solomon, will also clothe me.

Q. What is the best robe that God putteth upon us?

A. Righteousness.

THE TEXTS.

1 Pet. i. 54. *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.*

Matt. vi. 30. *If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall he not much more clothe you?*

Psalm cxxxii. 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness.*

LESSON VI.

GOD AND THE HEAVENS.

Look how high the heavens are! how much higher must he be who made them so; and whose kingdom ruleth over all.

The heavens and the elements, the sun, the moon, and the stars, the winds, and the seasons, rule over man's body; and without them, we can neither act, nor breathe, nor live. But the soul of man lives under the kingdom of God. He is the father of spirits, and his grace ruleth over them all. Without his light I must walk in darkness; and without his Spirit I have no life in me.

Oh! the poor blind, who wander about without seeing the sun! But more miserably blind is he, whose mind is without the light of God's word. When our spirit departeth from us, then we die, and return again to the dust: and our soul must die in like manner, if the Spirit of God departeth from it.

Without the light of the holy Scripture we sit in darkness, and the shadow of death. Ignorance is the darkness of the mind; and it is worse than the darkness of Egypt, when God plagued those wicked people. As God is the author and giver of light, so is the devil the prince of darkness. God willeth that all men should see, and be saved; but the *God of this world blindeth mens eyes*, that the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ may be hidden from them.

Lord grant, that as I live and breathe under the elements and powers of this world in my mortal life; so my soul may live under thee, and be a member of thy kingdom, inheriting thy grace here, and thy glory

hereafter. Let me love the true light, and put away from me the works of darkness. Then shall I wish that thy kingdom may come; and that the heavens and the earth may pass away, that we may see all things new: when thou thyself shalt be our sun, thy Spirit our comforter, and the angels and saints shall be seen around thy throne, as the stars of heaven are seen by us shining in the firmament.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Who is the true sun that rules over the spirits of men?

A. God.

Q. Who is the true light, and the sun of righteousness?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Who gives life to the soul, as the air gives breath to our bodies?

A. The Holy Ghost.

Q. What gives light to the mind?

A. The word of God.

Q. What then are we, without the word of God?

A. We walk in darkness.

Q. What are we when we do not love the word of God, or do not use it to direct us?

A. Our souls are blind.

Q. Who is the prince of darkness?

A. The devil.

Q. Who are like the stars of the firmament?

A. The angels are such now, and the saints will be such hereafter.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm lxxxiv. 11. *The Lord God is a sun and a shield.*

John viii. 12. *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

John xx. 22. *He breathed upon them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost.*

Ezek. xxxvii. 9. *Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live.*

Psalm cxix. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.*

Luke i. 79. *To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.*

2 Cor. iv. 4. *The God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not.*

Dan. xii. 3. *They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*

1 Cor. xv. 41. *One star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.*

LESSON VII.

THE BEE.

Here is a piece of pure white honeycomb. How exactly it is formed into cells, all of a size, and all of the same curious and convenient figure, with six sides or walls, and the bottom so contrived as to answer to the cells on either side. Yet, exact and wonderful as this honeycomb is, the bee made it and measured it in the dark! No man could have made it in the light; because no man hath the fingers or the wisdom of the bee.

The bee, to look upon, is a poor little brown fly, with no beauty to make us admire it; yet it is the

wisest of all insects. So is the nightingale, with all its musical notes, which fill the woods, and charm the ear in the spring-time, a little brown bird not so handsome as a sparrow. The excellence of these creatures is in their art and wisdom, not in their outward form and beauty. The painted butterfly is very much admired; but it never makes any honey. The peacock has feathers embroidered with gold, and shining like the rainbow; but its voice is little better than the braying of the ass.

The bee, like the ant, is a pattern of diligence. As often as the sun shines, she goes out to work, and never loses any opportunity of gathering and laying up her honey. There is an idle sort of bees in the hive, which are called drones: these are killed and cast out by the busy bees; and it is a rule amongst them, as it ought to be amongst Christians, that if any will not work, neither should he eat; as being one who is unworthy to live. If any man eat without working, somebody else must work the more for it. If one of the legs should be benumbed, and will not walk, the other leg must do the work of both.

When the bees swarm, a royal bee, larger than the rest, is their leader, who is said to be a female; her motions they all obey. Wherever this bee pleases to alight, there the swarm settles; and they live orderly under her government in the hive.—There is one who keeps watch toward the mouth of the hive, to observe all that passes in and out. If one bee is overloaded, others go to help it; and if one hath suffered from the weather, or any other accident, another goes to it to comfort and cure it. They are armed with stings to defend themselves, and they all fight together in a body against an enemy, so that neither man nor beast can resist their power.

Happy is the man, and happy are the people who are directed by such rules of wisdom and policy as the bees are!

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Can a man make a honeycomb?
A. No art can make it but that of the bee.
Q. And who taught the bee?
A. The Creator of the world.
Q. Does it want the day-light when it is busy?
A. No, it measures its work in the dark.
Q. What is the other example of industry, among the insects?
A. The ant, whose ways are very instructive to us.
Q. How does the swarm treat the idle bees?
A. They kill them and cast them out.
Q. Have the bees a royal leader?
A. Yes; and they are all obedient subjects.
Q. How do the bees defend themselves?
A. With their stings.
Q. Against what enemies?
A. Against wasps and other robbers.

THE TEXTS.

Ecclus. ix. 2, 3. *Commend not a man for his beauty; neither abhor a man for his outward appearance. The bee is little among such as fly, but her fruit is the chief of sweet things.*

Jam. i. 5. *If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God.*

Prov. vi. 6. *Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise.*

2 Thess. iii. 10. *This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

1 Pet. ii. 17. *Fear God, honour the king.*

Heb. xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you.*

LESSON VIII.

THE BLOWING FLOWER.

In the spring the plant groweth up, and its seeds are ripe in the summer and the autumn. Its leaves are green, and its flowers are painted with colours; some are red, some blue, some yellow, some mixed, and spotted, and some of a pure white, like the lily. The fine painted leaves of the flower are the clothing which covers the seeds while they are young and tender. For this reason, the leaves of the flower shut close together in the evening, to guard the young seeds from the cold of the night; as the hen covereth her young brood under her wings. But in the day-time, the rays of the sun spread the flower open, and the seeds receive the benefit of the warmth to cherish them, and make them grow.—When the vessel which holds the seed becomes harder and stronger, the leaves of the flower fall away to the ground; for they are of no farther use; as the infant is no longer swaddled when it is able to go alone.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Of what use are the painted leaves of a flower?

A. They clothe the young seeds, that the cold may not hurt them.

Q. When do the leaves of the flower fall away?

A. When the seed or fruit hath no farther need of them.

THE TEXT.

Matt. vi. 28. *Consider the lilies how they grow.*

LESSON IX.

THE LIVES OF A SEED.

But most wonderful is the progress of the seed from its first to its second life; for it hath two lives. During its first life, it grows and ripens in the plant which bears it, and then falls away to the earth out of which it grew. But it hath a second life after its resurrection from the earth; from whence it springs up with a life of its own, and with a new body. From every seed there groweth a plant of the same kind with that which bore the seed; God *giveth to every seed its own body.*

I also am taught by the word of God to expect two lives. The one is my present earthly life, which I have of my parents; the other is the life which I shall have after I have been buried. For as the seed *is not quickened except it die,* so cannot I obtain eternal life but by the way of death.

The grave is as the furrow of the field, in which the seed is sown; and as the sunshine of the spring raiseth the seed to life, so shall the Sun of Righteousness return, to raise all those who are buried in the earth. The time is coming, when they that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, as Lazarus came forth from the tomb, when Jesus called him.

The good seed of wheat, and other grain, is gathered for use, and laid up in the barn, as the righteous when they die, are gathered to their fathers; but the evil seeds of the thistle are blown about by the winds,

and scattered over the face of the earth. Such as I am at my death, such shall I be at my resurrection. If I am the seed of a thorn or a thistle when I die, (which God forbid) there will be no hope that I shall be found a rose or a lily, when I am risen again: for *every seed* will have *its own body*.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. How many lives hath a seed?

A. A first and a second.

Q. What is its first life?

A. That life to which it is born in the plant that bears it.

Q. Which is its second life?

A. That which it hath when it rises again from the earth.

Q. With what sort of body doth it come?

A. With its own body.

Q. What do you mean by its own body?

A. A plant of the same kind with the seed that was sown.

Q. What is your first life?

A. My natural life, which I have of my parents.

Q. What is your second life?

A. My spiritual life, which God will give to my body after it hath been sown in the earth, and raised again.

Q. The sun brings seeds to life; but who is to raise the dead?

A. Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.

Q. What becomes of good and bad seed, when they are ripe?

A. Wheat is gathered, and thistles are scattered by the winds.

THE TEXTS.

1 Cor. xv. 44. *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.* ver. 38. *God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body.*

Isa. xxvi. 19. *Thy dead men shall live: together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.*

1 Cor. xv. 36. *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.*

Eph. v. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

Matt. xiii. 30. *Gather the wheat into my barn.*

2 Kings xxii. 20. *I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace.*

Isa. xli. 16. *The wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them.*

LESSON X.

WATER AND THE SPIRIT.

When I wash my hands with water to make them clean, I should pray to God that he would be pleased to *make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.* The foulness of my hands is easily washed away, but I cannot wash the inward stain of sin from my soul, and give myself a clean heart. This is a second birth, and is no more in my own power than my first birth was. God, who willeth that all sinners should be saved, sent out his Apostles to baptize all nations,

with water and the Holy Ghost, without which they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

In the temple of Solomon, there was a large bason, called a sea; it was made of brass, to hold water for the washing of those who came to worship. Under it there were the figures of twelve oxen; three of them looking each way, toward the four quarters of the heavens; to shew that baptism should be carried out into all the world, by the twelve ministers of Jesus Christ. They have brought it even unto me, and I have been washed in baptism, that I may be saved. But I may defile myself, and lose the benefit of it; as the swine when it is washed, returns again to its wallowing in the mire. As the swine delighteth to be unclean, so do some take pleasure in a dirty conscience. Such are not the better, but the worse for their baptism; they forfeit the wedding garment. The sheep and the lamb, when they are washed, keep themselves pure.—So must I, if I wish to continue in the fold with the sheep of Christ; who has promised to be my shepherd, to feed me in a green pasture, and to make me lie down beside the waters of comfort. He will appear again to separate the sheep from the goats, in the day of judgment; when, I trust, of his mercy, he will set me on his right hand, and make me happy for ever in his own kingdom.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What doth the water of baptism wash away?

A. The stain of sin.

Q. But water cannot do this of itself.

A. No, it is an outward and visible sign of the Spirit of God.

Q. What did that brazen sea signify, which con-

tained water for the purification of those who washed in the temple?

A. It shewed that baptism should be carried out from Judea to the four quarters of the world, that all nations might be baptized.

Q. What is the duty of those whom God hath washed from sin?

A. To keep themselves pure and unspotted.

Q. What would the swine do if it were washed?

A. It would turn again to wallow in the mire.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm li. 7. *Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

2 Kings v. 10. *Wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean.*

1 Tim. v. 22. *Keep thyself pure.*

Jude, 23. *Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

LESSON XI.

GOD AND THE JUDGE.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. There is no secret place in which the sinner can hide himself; for God, who is present every where, seeth in the dark as well as in the light. He heareth us when we do not speak; because he heareth our thoughts. As the light of the sun reaches to the ends of the world, and to the bottom of the sea; so doth the presence of God reach to all places and all times, though we see him not. If

his power were not constantly upon us, we should be nothing; for *in him we live and move, and have our being*.

The judge who punisheth sins in a court of justice, receiveth his information from others, and can know only that which the witnesses tell him. But God is both judge and witness, and knoweth all things. When the judge hath condemned a man, and he is put to death, he hath no more that he can do: but the power of God reaches beyond the grave; for he can destroy both the soul and body in hell. His hand shall find out those whom the grave hath hidden from our sight, and they shall be brought forth and placed before his judgment-seat, to be judged for their past lives. Thefts, murders, and other sins, which were committed in the dark, and were hidden from men so long as the offenders lived, shall then be all discovered and made known. With the fear of this, the guilty shall tremble when they rise from their graves: then shall they call out upon the mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of their Judge.

That I may not be afraid to meet my God in that great day, let me now set him before me in all my thoughts, words, and actions. Let me live every day as in his sight; then will he be my friend to save me, and my father to reward me, not my Judge to condemn and punish me. It is his will, that all should repent and be saved. The fire of hell was not made for me; it was made for the devil and his angels. If I come there at last, it will be my own fault, for God hath sent his Son to seek me, and deliver me from the wrath to come.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Is God every where present?

A. His eyes are in every place.

Q. How can the presence of God extend to every place?

A. As the light which issues from the sun penetrates all things, and goeth out to the ends of the world.

Q. What would the soul of man be without God?

A. As his body would be without the sun, lifeless and motionless; for God is necessary to our being.

Q. How doth the power of God extend to sinners after this life?

A. He can destroy the soul as well as the body.

Q. What is the grave to wicked men?

A. A prison from which they shall be dragged to be condemned at the last day.

Q. Who shall bear witness against them?

A. God seeth all their actions now; but then, the devil and their own consciences shall accuse and expose them.

Q. How are we to avoid this dreadful condemnation?

A. By judging ourselves, and setting the Lord always before us.

Q. For whom is the fire of hell prepared?

A. Not for me, but for the devil and his angels.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm cxxxix. 2. *Thou art about my path, and about my bed, and spiest out all my ways.* ver. 11. *The darkness and light to thee are both alike.*

Acts xvii. 22. *In him we live and move, and have our being.*

Psalm xix. 6. *There is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*

Heb. iv. 13. *All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him, with whom we have to do.*

Luke xii. 5. *Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.*

Eccles. xii. 14. *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

Matth. xxv. 41. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

LESSON XII.

SLEEP AND DREAMS.

When I sleep, my fancy is led about by dreams. I am disturbed by vain hopes and fears; but I awake and they are all gone. I am affrighted and run away when there is no danger, and I am delighted with that which is nothing but a shadow. I think I am flying through the air, while I am motionless in my bed. I think I have found great treasures; but I awake, and am as poor as ever. Of that which is real I have no knowledge, while my mind is thus filled with shadows: but perhaps I dream that I am sailing on the water, while the chamber in which I sleep hath taken fire; and I know it not till the flames reach my body, and awake me; then I start up, but it is too late to escape.

Now let me ask my heart this question; am not I, who am thus deceived in my sleep, in danger of being

deceived when I am awake? If my fancy is filled with such things, as will have no substance when I awake in the morning of the resurrection, then will my whole life be no better than a dream: and of that which is real I shall have no knowledge or sense. When I am told of God, or of heaven, or of the wrath to come, these things will not affect me, because I am in a sort of sleep, and my heart is filled with things of no substance. The rich man in the parable, was lulled to sleep by his fine clothing and his sumptuous living, and he never awaked till he died. Then he lift up his eyes, and found himself in a place of torment.

What are the pleasures of youth, the honours of manhood, or the wealth of age? Will they last? And can we carry them with us beyond the grave? No! they will all forsake us, and be left behind us as the shadow of a dream. Yet these are the things the world seeketh after, and their fancy is so employed that they can think of nothing else. *Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* When he is awake, he is employed just as men are when they are asleep; his time is taken up, and his mind is disquieted, like the mind of a man in a dream, with things which prove to be nothing at last. His life hath nothing real in it, and so it is but the shadow of life, *a vain shadow.*

But if I serve God and read his word, and say my prayers, and do good to the poor; then I act like a man who is awake; for these and other like things, are all real and lasting as God himself is; and the fruit of them will remain with me for ever. When I awake in another world, I shall still be the servant of God, as I am now: his word and his wisdom will de-

light me as they do now, and much more, because I shall understand them better; and what I have given to the poor upon earth, I shall find again as a treasure in heaven.

Lord, let me not sleep, as others do, in sin; but let me walk with thee, as a child of the day, and be awake unto righteousness; that when I shall awake from death, I may find myself in thy presence, and live in thy heavenly kingdom, where is neither darkness nor vanity, neither dreams nor shadows; but all is truth, and all is light, for ever and ever.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What strange things happen to us when we are asleep?

A. Our mind is deceived with dreams and visions, which we believe to be true.

Q. And what happens to us when we are awake?

A. We deceive ourselves with many visions, and think to no more purpose than men do who are asleep.

Q. When the mind is in this state, what doth it perceive of things real; such as God, heaven, hell, and the resurrection of the dead, and such like?

A. No more than a man asleep perceives of the fire which is about to burn him in his bed.

Q. When did Dives lift up his eyes?

A. Not till he was in torments.

Q. What rule have you to distinguish between shadows and substances?

A. All things that vanish with this present life are false: all things that endure beyond it are true, and will never deceive us.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm xxxix. 6. *Man walketh in a vain shadow.*

1 Thess. v. 6. *Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch, and be sober.*

Eph. v. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

Luke vii. 14. *Young man, I say unto thee arise.*

Psalm lxxvi. 5. *The proud are robbed; they have slept their sleep; and all the men whose hands were mighty, have found nothing.*

Psalm xvii. 16. *When I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.*

LESSON XIII.

THE GREAT FAMILY.

God is my father, the Church is my mother; all Christian people are my brethren in Jesus Christ, who is the true Son of God. We all make one family under the same head, and the same Saviour; and the angels of heaven are comprehended within this family, as well as the saints upon earth. It is called the Church: and I was born unto God, and made a member of it by baptism; as surely as I was made a member of this world by my birth from my natural parents. I do not belong to the Church by any right of nature, but only by the grace and calling of God.

If God is my father I may depend upon his goodness and affection to me; but I must pray to him, as I make my wants known to my earthly parents. I must also expect that God will chastise and correct me for my faults; even as every wise father punish-

eth the child in whom he delighteth. How unhappy are those children, who are under foolish parents, who keep them in ignorance, and ruin them with indulgence! God's children are not so left to themselves. Let me then be thankful when I am corrected in mercy; as a token of my adoption, and election to be a child of God.

If the Church is my mother, who hath brought me forth to be an heir of glory; it is my duty to conform to her rules, that I may have the benefit of her ordinances.

If Christian people are my brethren, it must be my duty to love them; and to bear in mind that wise advice of the good *Joseph* to his brethren, *see that ye fall not out by the way.* In our journey through life, we are under so many trials and afflictions, that it is both foolish and wicked for Christian brethren to add to one another's troubles by strife and envying, by quarrellings and disputings.

Proud people are ashamed of their poor relations; but I must not be ashamed to own the poorest child in the family of God; who, perhaps, after a laborious life of faith and patience, will be my superior in the kingdom of heaven. I am to remember that Jesus Christ, the head of this great and holy family, was made poor for my sake, and doth now hear the prayers and attend to the wants of the poorest Christian. Who then am I, that I should dare to despise or neglect those of whom Jesus Christ is mindful? When I do them good, I must do it because they belong to him; not to shew my own superiority, or to obtain the praises of men; and then all I do will be accepted, and I shall have treasure in heaven.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Who is your spiritual father?

A. God the father of spirits.

Q. Who is your spiritual mother?

A. The Church.

Q. Who are your brethren?

A. All Christian people.

Q. How do they become such?

A. In Jesus Christ, who is the true Son of God, and the first-born of many brethren.

Q. When was you taken into this family?

A. When I was baptized.

Q. How far doth this great family extend?

A. It takes in the angels of heaven, and all saints departed.

Q. What must you do, if God is your father?

A. I must make my wants known to him in prayer, as children do.

Q. And what will God do as a father?

A. He will correct me in love and mercy, that my own will may not ruin me.

Q. What duty is required of you to the Church?

A. To conform myself to her rules, that I may have the benefit of her sacraments.

Q. What duty is required toward your brethren?

A. To love and be at peace with them.

Q. Are you to be ashamed of poor Christians?

A. No; we are all equal in the house of God.

Q. Why are you to do good to the poor?

A. Because they belong to Christ.

THE TEXTS.

Luke xi. 2. *Our Father which art in heaven.*

Gal. iv. 26. *But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*

Col. i. 2. *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ.*

Eph. iii. 14. *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.*

Eph. i. 22. *And gave him to be head over all things to the church.*

Matth. vi. 6. *Pray to thy Father.*

Rev. iii. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.*

Deut. viii. 5. *As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord chasteneth thee.*

Matth. xviii. 17. *Hear the church.*

1 Pet. iii. 8. *Love as brethren.*

1 Cor. xii. 13. *We are all baptized into one body, whether we be boud or free.*

Mark ix. 41. *Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.*

LESSON XIV.

THE SOUL AND THE BODY.

I HAVE a soul within me, which I cannot see; but I know that it lives, because it acts; and I am taught to understand its actions from the senses of my body. As the eyes of the body see things, so doth the

soul *know and understand:* as the body hears, so doth the soul *attend* and *obey*. As the body feels, so is the mind affected in the passions. As the body *smelleth* and *tasteth,* so doth the soul *relish* some things, and dislike others, and is able to *distinguish* between good and evil. As the body hungers and thirsts, so hath the soul its appetites, and must be nourished by such food as is proper for it.

A perfect soul, is like a body in its full health and strength; but since Adam fell into sin, and became subject to death, there is no such perfect soul now in the nature of man. The soul is sick, and must be cured; it must even be born again to a new life, before it can serve God, and understand his word. Jesus Christ came into the world as the physician of mankind; but if we had been whole, we should have had no need of him.

All the evils and distempers of the soul are shewn by the various diseases of the body; and if there had been no sin in the soul, there would have been no sickness in the body.

The miserable effects of sin are as wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. The foulness of that sinful nature which descends to us from our parents, is as the leprosy, which comes by inheritance, and infects the whole man. We have no ears to hear the word of God, nor eyes to see the wonderous things of his law; but are by nature deaf and blind toward God and all goodness. We have no more ability to praise him, than if we were dumb; neither can we lift up our hands, nor bend our knees in prayer, till he gives us new strength.

Therefore Jesus Christ, who came to cure our souls of all their infirmities, opened the eyes of the blind: he made the deaf to hear, and the dumb to

speak; he gave strength to the lame, and even raised the dead, to shew that he gives us a new life.

Let me then, O Lord, receive the benefit of thy coming. Cure my sick soul of all its infirmities, and call me by thy voice, as thou didst call thy friend Lazarus, to a new life. Restore me to my sight, and my hearing, that I be not as the hardened Jews, who had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not. Cleanse me from all my sins, even as thou didst cleanse the lepers that cried unto thee; and renew a right spirit within me. Let my faith cry unto thee, and thy power will at all times be ready to heal and to save me.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. How are we to understand the soul?
A. From the senses of the body.
Q. Is there any such a thing as a perfect soul?
A. Never since the fall of Adam.
Q. What then must be done for us?
A. Our souls must be cured.
Q. What then is Jesus Christ?
A. He is the physician of souls.
Q. Why did he cure men's bodies?
A. To shew that he restores their souls.
Q. On whom were the miracles of Christ and his Apostles wrought?
A. On those only who had faith to be healed.
Q. What follows from thence?
A. That without faith I cannot be saved.

THE TEXTS.

1 Cor. xv. 22. *In Adam all die.*

Rom. iii. 10. *There is none righteous, no not one.*

Matth. ix. 35. *Jesus went about healing every sickness.*

Acts xiv. 9. *Perceiving that he had faith to be healed.*

Matth. ix. 12. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick—I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Psalm xli. 4. *Heal my soul for I have sinned against thee.*

Psalm cxlvi. 8. *The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind.*

Isa. xxxv. 4. *God will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped—then shall the lame man leap, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing,* &c.

LESSON XV.

THE SAVIOUR AND THE DESTROYER.

As surely as there is light, so surely is there a God; and as surely as there is darkness, so surely is there a spirit of darkness, whom we call the devil. It is necessary for me to know God, by whom I am to be saved; and woe be unto me, if I know not the devil, by whose devices I may be destroyed. But as I cannot see him, (for he is a spirit) I must learn what he is, by the pictures which are given me of his evil nature. He is called the *destroyer,* and is contrary in every respect to the *Saviour.*

Jesus Christ is the true light; but he is the prince of darkness, the god of this world, who blindeth

men's eyes, that they may not see the truth. My Saviour is a shepherd, who giveth his life for the sheep; but the devil is a lion, who goeth about seeking what he may devour. The one is a lamb, meek and harmless; the other a serpent, full of devices, and more subtle than any beast of the field. The one raises men to life; the other was a murderer from the beginning. The one is my advocate with the Father; suffering and pleading for the pardon of my sins: the other is the accuser of the brethren; first tempting them to fall into sin, and then accusing them that they may fall under the judgment of God. Jesus Christ is the truth; and the devil is the father of lies. And lastly, Jesus Christ is the true God, worshipped by all believers; and the devil is the false god, worshipped under a variety of names by the heathen world.

If I love God and goodness, I shall be like the Saviour; but if my eyes should be blinded, then I shall be like the destroyer. The children of the devil are like the devil; as the young viper is like the old one. There have always been two sorts of people in the world; the sons of God and the seed of the serpent; and God hath put such enmity between them, as shall last as long as the world doth. Why did the Jews crucify Jesus Christ; and why did the heathens persecute Christians, and put them cruelly to death; but because they were of their father the devil, and filled with the same spirit of envy and hatred as he is? His name is called *Satan,* which means an *adversary;* because he is the adversary of God and man. Peace and quietness are never promoted by him, but opposition and confusion: he soweth the seeds of discord, and stirs up men to tumult and rage, as the stormy wind stirreth up the waves of the sea. He is pleased, when men kill one another with the sword, in carnal

war: but more so, when they are set at variance by perverse disputings, which are the wars of the mind, and such as spirits are most fit for.—All true peace is from the God of peace; and all enmity is of the devil, and leads men naturally into his kingdom.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. How doth the natural world shew us that there is a spirit contrary to God?

A. Because it shews us, that there is darkness contrary to light.

Q. Is it necessary for us to believe that there is an evil spirit?

A. Certainly; because we may be destroyed by his devices.

Q. What are the names of the evil spirit?

A. He is a destroyer, an adversary; the prince of darkness; a false god of this world; a devouring lion; a subtle serpent; a liar, a tempter, an accuser, a murderer.

Q. To whom are wicked men like?

A. To their father the devil.

Q. Can good men and bad men agree together?

A. God hath put everlasting enmity between his children and the seed of the serpent.

Q. How did this enmity shew itself?

A. In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ by the Jews, and the persecutions of his Church by the heathens.

Q. In what doth the devil delight?

A. In war and confusion; and he sows the seeds of discord among Christians, to make divisions in the Church.

Q. Whither will hatred and uncharitableness lead men?

A. Into the kingdom of Satan, where there will be no peace to all eternity.

THE TEXTS.

2 Cor. vi. 14. *What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?*

Eph. vi. 11. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.*

John viii. 44. *Ye are of your father the devil.*

Matt. x. 22. *Ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake.*

1 John iii. 12. *Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.* ver. 14. *He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.*

1 Cor. x. 20. *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God.*

LESSON XVI.

THE PARABLE.

A PARABLE teaches us doctrines from the likeness of some things to other things: but we shall not see and allow of this likeness, if we either hate or disbelieve the doctrine which a parable teacheth. In the parable of the sower, we are taught,

1. That the *word of God* is like the *seed* which is sown in the field; that it may take root, and bear fruit against the harvest:

2. That he who preacheth is like him that soweth: the one can do no more than the other; for God must give the increase in both cases. Without the rain and sunshine the seed cannot grow; and without the assistance of divine grace, the Gospel will not take effect. In some cases the preaching of the word succeeds, and in other cases it doth not: because,

3. The hearts of men, into which the word is sown, are of different sorts; as the ground of the field is, upon which the seed falleth. Some are like the highway side; conformed in every thing to this world; open, and therefore unguarded, and exposed to every common temptation; so that as the birds pick up what falls upon the highway, the devil steals the word out of the hearts of such people. Other hearts are like shallow earth, with hard stones underneath; which retain no moisture: and as the sun scorcheth the seed upon such ground, so cannot hard-hearted impatient people bear such trials as the word of God brings upon them; but they are offended therewith, and so the word perishes. Others are like ground, upon which thorns grow up along with the grain, and smother it. Such are they whose hearts are full of worldly cares and pleasures, and intent upon getting riches.

As cares have the nature of thorns, so have pleasures too; for they wound the heart and prick the conscience; and riches themselves are mostly as unprofitable to the mind as thorns, and pierce us through with many sorrows. Amongst these the good seed cannot prosper; as wheat and thorns cannot grow up together. Happy then are they, whose hearts are as good ground, to receive and keep the word of God which the preacher soweth. Their hearts are soft and tender, and sincere; they hear and understand, and bring forth fruit with patience; some more, some less.

As the seed groweth up into the ear or grain, so doth the word of God, when it comes to perfection, bring forth the fruit of good works. And when the harvest cometh, which is the end of the world, the fruitful sheaves shall be reaped by the angels, and laid up in the heavenly storehouse; but thorns and tares shall be gathered together and burned. Such will be the end of those who do not understand, and profit by the word of God. This word is preached to me in the Gospel; and if it doth not take effect upon me, the fault will be in the ground, and not in the seed. Grant, therefore, O Lord, that I may so hear and receive it, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word, I may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is a parable?

A. It teaches us to understand some things from the nature of other things. It is the doctrine of the Gospel in the language of nature.

Q. Therefore every parable requires an interpretation?

A. Yes; it teaches us nothing till it is interpreted. A parable without its interpretation, is like a body without a soul; or like the outward sign in a sacrament, without the inward and spiritual grace.

Q. What is meant by the seed?

A. The word of God.

Q. What is the sower?

A. The preacher, who preacheth the word of God.

Q. What is the ground, into which the seed is sown?

A. The heart of man.

Q. And how do the hearts of men differ from one another?

A. As the different sorts of ground which we see in the field.

Q. What is meant by the highway side?

A. The heart, which is open and unguarded against all temptations.

Q. What is meant by the fowls of the air?

A. Evil spirits, which steal away the word as soon as the people have heard it.

Q. What is the stony ground?

A. The impatient heart of shallow-minded people, who do not understand the word of God, and so can endure no trouble.

Q. What is meant by the scorching heat of the sun?

A. Trials and persecutions for the truth's sake.

Q. What is meant by thorns?

A. The cares and pleasures of worldly-minded people.

Q. What happens when they prevail?

A. The word of God is choked by them.

Q. Are pleasures thorns?

A. Yes; because they prick the heart at last, as much as any cares and troubles; and at all times hinder it from attending to the word of God.

Q. What is meant by the good ground?

A. The honest and good heart.

Q. What is the fruit which the seed bringeth forth?

A. Good works.

Q. What is the harvest?

A. The end of the world.

Q. What is done then?

A. The fruitful sheaves, good Christians, are laid up in the storehouse of God.

Q. What are the wicked?

A. Tares which are bound up for the fire.
Q. Who will be the reapers?
A. The Angels of God.

THE TEXTS.

Mark iv. 13. *And he said unto him, know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?*

Luke viii. 11. *The seed is the word of God,* ver. 12. *Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.* ver. 13. *They on the rock, are they which when they hear receive the word with joy, but in time of temptation fall away.*

Matt. xiii. 22. *The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word.* ver. 23. *The good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit.*

Matt. xiii. 38. *The good seed are the children of the kingdom: but the tares are the children of the wicked one.* ver. 39. *The harvest is the end of the world. As the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world.*

Heb. ix. 19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure* (Gr.) in a *parable.*

Ezek. xx. 47. *Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree—Ah, Lord God, they say of me, doth he not speak parables?*

END OF PART I.

THE

BOOK OF NATURE;

OR,

THE TRUE SENSE OF THINGS,

EXPLAINED AND MADE EASY

TO THE

CAPACITIES OF CHILDREN.

PART II.

To Mrs. W——, of G——.

Madam,

To whom can I present this second part of the Book of Nature so properly as to you; who by the good use you made of the first part, have given me encouragement to proceed.

I have taken pleasure in many different studies; and some of my productions have been the fruit of much labour: but I look upon this little book as a work of more hope than some others of greater appearance. The new language of it is a sort of new wine, which must be put into new vessels, into minds untainted by false learning, unoccupied by the prejudices of education; and then, little preparation will be required in the scholar, more than a good knowledge of the Catechism of the Church of England, and a readiness in the reading of the Scripture, and in turning to the several parts of it. This second set of Lessons hath already been tried upon the forwardest children of our Sunday Schools; and, from the progress they make, and the avidity with which they receive this kind of instruction, I am able to answer for the good effect of it. I can therefore recommend it to you with the greater confidence. If it

succeeds in my hands, it may succeed better in your's; who, from your own judgment, will enlarge upon my several subjects in a familiar conversation with your little disciples; and thereby render these lessons more instructive, as well as more agreeable. In the way I have marked out, go on, after your own manner, and the Lord prosper you.

May 1, 1792.

THE

BOOK OF NATURE,

PART II.

I. THE CHAPTER OF CHILDREN.

JESUS CHRIST took a little child, and set him forth as a pattern, to shew with what temper of mind his doctrine must be received; and that men, even the greatest and the wisest of them, must become as little children, before they can be his disciples.

For the same reason the Apostle also exhorts all Christians to return to the state of children, and to desire like *new-born babes* the sincere *milk of the word.* They can receive nothing on any other condition: for, is it not said, that he who will enter into the kingdom of heaven, must be *born* again? And he who is newly born must be in the state of a child? When a child comes to be taught, it comes in simplicity: it has no opinion of its own to be proud of: it receives the word of God from its spiritual parent the Church, as children receive milk from the breast of their mother, and are nourished thereby.

When a master undertakes to teach, he does not find his labour easier, but harder, and sometimes hopeless, from the ill habits the scholar has acquired in teaching himself, and the opinion of his own suf-

ficiency. This case, though generally troublesome, is never so dangerous, as when human wisdom has been meddling with divine things: therefore, when God teaches us such things, he will have none of our wisdom to begin with. He hath warned us, that his thoughts are not like ours; that he measures good and evil by a different rule: whence it comes to pass, that a man's own wisdom will never assist him in receiving the wisdom of God. The things of God cannot be seen but by the gift, that is, by the grace of God: and his gifts are never thrown away upon a proud mind; ne *resisteth the proud,* and sendeth away the rich empty and ignorant. And in this the judgment of God is not to be censured, but adored. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Matth. xi. 25.

If Christianity were doubtful, or of human invention, then it would be a good way to provide ourselves with as much of our own wisdom as we could, that we might be able to judge of it: but if it is from God, of whom we are unfit to judge, this method will never fail to lead us into error; and many who pursue it wander from one error to another, till they fall into total unbelief.

As children are preferred to be taught of God here upon earth; so we are told, that they are received into heaven; and that the whole kingdom of God is made up of children, and of those who are like them. They who will not be taught with children, shall not go to heaven with children. Many are too proud to make children of themselves, even when they have God for their master, and therefore many will fall short of it. Try the Gospel upon a child:—he receives instruction

from God without gainsaying, as he received milk from the breast of his mother. Try the same upon the wise man of nature:—he must judge of it by some rule of his own; he must put the light of the sun to some test, before he consents to see by it; and so he walks on still in darkness: he has been poring and prying, by a bad light, into things he does not understand, till he has hurt his eyes, and cannot see so much as a little child can: yet he is full of conceit, and thinks he can judge of every thing. When Elymas, the sorcerer, was struck blind, he sought for somebody to lead him by the hand; but these take upon them to be guides, and think nobody can go right without their leading.

If the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation, blessed are they who are not offended at it, and have no reason against it; who rejoice to see the things of heaven by the light of heaven, as they adore God in his works when they see them by the light of his own sun. They among the Jews, who became reputedly wise under a false education, were the worse hearers our Saviour ever met with, because they were fond of their own traditions, and proud of their own attainments. He that hath been taught ill, is more incapable than he who hath not been taught at all. *If ye were blind,* said our Saviour, *ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.* This a child never says; therefore he is fit to be taught of God: and every human teacher, who begins with his scholars in their childhood, will soon find, that he does more good by teaching one child than by teaching some twenty men; which consideration is a great encouragement, and gives much hope of success to the writer of this little book.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What temper must be found in all the disciples of Jesus Christ?

A. The temper of a child.

Q. Why so?

A. Because no other can receive his word.

Q. Why cannot men receive the Gospel as well as children?

A. Because they are apt to have wrong opinions of their own, on the authority of which they presume to judge the doctrines of God.

Q. Why did not the Jewish Doctors receive the Gospel?

A. Because they had been ill taught, and had a great conceit of their own learning.

Q. To what is the word of God compared?

A. To *sincere* or *pure* milk.

Q. Why so?

A. Because it gives nourishment and growth to the mind, and is fit for those only who are of teachable dispositions, like children.

Q. How does God treat those who are wise in their own conceit?

A. He hides from them the things of heaven, so that they cannot see what a child can see.

Q. To whom does he reveal mysteries?

A. To babes, and to those who are like them.

Q. Of whom is the kingdom of heaven composed?

A. Of children, and of those who are like them.

Q. Why will many fall short of it?

A. Because they are too proud to make children of themselves, even in the sight of God.

Q. Which is the best time of life to learn the word of God?

A. In our childhood, before we have been ill taught, or have taken up any vain conceits of our own.

N. B. It is easier to learn twenty good things, than to unlearn one bad one.

THE TEXTS.

Matth. xviii. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as* little children, *ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Matth. x. 14. *Suffer the* little children *to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.*

1 Pet. ii. 2. *Wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as* new born babes, *desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*

II. THE CHAPTER OF THE RACE.

If a man, when he has undertaken to run a race, eats and drinks as he used to do, and carries the same weight of clothes upon his back, or wears a long garment down to his heels, instead of being girded up and lightly clothed, he must be a fool. His fellow-champions despise him; the spectators laugh at him; and he returns home with shame and disgrace, while the children of the street follow him and make a jest of him.

Unless I take heed to myself, I shall be one of those who thus expose and disappoint themselves. For my

life is not a journey of curiosity; it is a *course*, a *race;* in which I must either win the heavenly prize, or lose it. If this is the case, no duty of life must be performed with sloth or carelessness, but with exercise and attention, and with an active mind, as if I was intent upon victory at every step. I can never hope to succeed or excel, unless I do whatever I undertake *with all my might*, as one who is striving to win the prize in a race.

I may learn how to prepare myself for my Christian course, if I consider what was done by those who anciently strove for the mastery in any manly exercise. I am to make them my pattern, as the Apostle hath instructed me.

1. They prepared themselves for the day of trial by diligent and laborious exercise beforehand. I have more encouragement to do this than they had. Therefore, said the Apostle to his son Timothy, *exercise thyself unto godliness; for bodily exercise profiteth little;* the prize to be obtained by it is inconsiderable; *but godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.*

2. That they might use their limbs to greater advantage, they threw off their clothes; and the term which denotes *exercise*, implies that they were naked. I must also take care not to put on too much of this world, but to *lay aside every weight*, that I may be light and active in my spirit; according to that precept, *gird up the loins of your minds;* that being unincumbered with the world, they may be prepared for the *Christian race.*

3. They observed strict temperance; because the body, the more it is fed and indulged, the less fit it becomes for action. *He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.* I am striving for the mas-

tery ; therefore I must be careful not to weaken my mind by intemperance and fulness of body.

4. They were anxious for the prize, and the honour of the victory. They considered that, though all run in a race, the prize is given but to *one*. It was not sufficient with them to do *well;* it was their object to do *best;* and it must be ours, *so to run that we may obtain.*

5. It was a great obligation upon them to do their best, and had a great effect upon their minds, when they found themselves before a multitude of spectators, whose eyes were upon them ; and particularly those of their near friends, who were earnest for their success ; or of their enemies, who had an interest against it. We are also striving before a cloud of witnesses ; we are made *a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.* Good men are praying for the success of our endeavours ; the angels stand ready to receive and applaud us when the race is over ; and God will give us the promised reward : for,

6. As the conquerors of old, when they had won the race, received an honourable garland of flowers, and were celebrated in songs ; so do we also expect to be crowned. Their garlands, how gay soever they might be at first, soon faded away ; but the crown for which we strive is uncorruptible and eternal. When the blessed St. Paul had *finished his course,* there was then nothing before his mind but the reward of his victory—*henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*

If there is joy among the angels of heaven, when one sinner repenteth upon earth ; what will be the congratulations, the songs of triumph, when the righteous shall be met, at the end of their race, by the inhabitants of heaven!

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Why is the Christian life compared to a race?

A. Because it is a course of righteousness, with a crown of glory for the prize.

Q. Are you under like circumstances with those who run in a race?

A. I have engaged myself to strive; and I must either win heaven, or lose it.

Q. How are you to prepare yourself, that you may win the prize in this race?

A. As they did of old, who strove for the mastery in any manly exercise.

Q. What rules did they observe?

A. They exercised themselves diligently beforehand; and I must exercise my mind unto godliness, that I may be prepared against the day of trial.

Q. How did they exercise themselves?

A. They laid aside their clothes, that they might not be hindered by any unnecessary weight or incumbrance.

Q. And what are you to do?

A. To keep myself light and active for the Christian course.

Q. How are you to do that?

A. To cast off the unnecessary weight of riches, worldly cares, and pleasures.

Q. Is there not some particular impediment, which every particular Christian is to lay aside?

A. There is some one sin, which wraps itself more closely about him, and is harder to put off than any other, and hinders him most of all in his Christian progress.

Q. What else was required of those who were preparing for the race?

A. To be temperate in all things: for this contributes as much to the strength of the mind as of the body.

Q. What obligations are you under to do the best you can?

A. The race is not won, but by him who does his utmost: he that is careless will not obtain, neither doth he deserve the prize.

Q. What other obligation are you under?

A. I am striving before a cloud of witnesses, who will receive and applaud me if I succeed.

Q. Who are they?

A. The holy angels; all good men; and all they who have already run the race of faith, and obtained the prize.

Q. How were the conquerors rewarded of old time?

A. With a crown or garland of laurels and flowers.

Q. What will be your reward?

A. An eternal crown which fadeth not.

THE TEXTS.

Heb. xii. 1. *Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily best us; and let us run with patience the race which is set before us.*

1 Cor. ix. 24, &c. *They which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: so run, that ye may obtain.*

And every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly—but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest while I have preached unto others, I myself should be a castaway.

III. THE CHAPTER OF TABERNACLES.

All men are but passengers and pilgrims through this world; and it is a fatal mistake to think we are possessors of any thing, of houses or lands, when we are no more than tenants and occupiers in this transitory life. Some dwell in stately palaces; and many more in poor cottages; but all are born to the same mortality. If the poor man's hut drops into decay, he dies never the sooner: and if the house of the rich is founded upon a rock, he lives never the longer.

To prevent all mistakes from distinctions of this kind, the holy Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, inhabited no lofty cities, built no strong holds; but lived in tents or tabernacles, with which they removed from place to place, as God was pleased to order them. This was very remarkable in their case; because they did it in a land which God had promised to them for an inheritance; thereby signifying, that they did not accept of the earthly land, but looked for a *better country, that is, an heavenly.* When the children of Israel were journeying to Canaan (to give us a pattern of the state of man in this world) they lived by encampments in a wilderness; removing their tents from place to place for forty years, and ending their days in that unsettled way of life. Even when the

people were fixed in Canaan, good men still devoted themselves to live as sojourners and pilgrims. We see this in the example of the Rechabites, who renounced the pleasures and possessions of the world, and dwelt in tents as their holy fathers had done before. Even God himself was pleased to partake of the condition of his people; making himself, even under the law, that stranger upon earth which he was to be afterwards under the Gospel. The place of his worship in the wilderness, and long afterwards, was not a house, but a tent and a tabernacle; and when the Word was made flesh, he is said to have *tabernacled* amongst us; living as one who renounced this world and all its possessions; more unprovided of house and land, than the foxes of the earth or the birds of the air. The passage from this world to the other is much more easy to those who live in this manner. The man of the world, who fixes his abode here, is violently torn away at his death, as a tree pulled up by the roots, and hath no prospect after it; but he who lives in a tent is easily removed. If we live in faith, we shall die in hope; knowing that, if our *earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved,* we have another building, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When we leave this land, on which we never rested, we find a better country, in which we may fix with safety; when we leave the buildings of this world, which fall into decay, we find an eternal city, whose builder and maker is God.

No subject is perfectly understood, till it excites devotion in us; and we should endeavour to give that turn to it, in some such way as this:

Lord, make me ever mindful, that I am a pilgrim and stranger upon earth; a passenger and traveller through this transitory life, to the possession which

thou didst promise to our forefather Abraham, and the heirs of his faith. As I have here no abiding-place, let me be content to lead a changeable unsettled life, if thou seest it good for me, as a tent is removed from one station to another; that, when all my jurneyings and encampments through this wilderness shall be finished, I may *see the felicity of thy chosen,* and *rejoice with thine inheritance;* dwelling with thee for ever in that holy land, and that heavenly city, which thou hast prepared and builded for thy holy patriarchs, and, with them, for all those who *through faith and patience* shall *inherit the promises. Amen.*

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is a Tabernacle?

A. A tent stretched out with cords, and moveable from one place to another.

Q. Who dwelt in these habitations?

A. The holy Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Q. Why did they inhabit such dwellings as Tabernacles?

A. To remind them daily that they were strangers upon earth.

Q. Had not God promised them the possession of the land in which they dwelt?

A. Yes: but he made them live in it as travellers or sojourners, to shew them and us, that the hope of all his Saints is in another life.

Q. Who else lived in Tabernacles?

A. The children of Israel, in their journeyings through the wilderness.

Q. How long did they live in this way?

A. Forty years: so that the whole generation of them who were brought out of Egypt finished their course, short of the promised land, in their unsettled habitations.

Q. Did good people understand what God intended by their dwelling in tents?

A. Certainly; because some dedicated themselves freely to this way of life, after they were settled in towns and cities.

Q. Who were such?

A. The Rechabites; whose father gave them a charge to renounce the world, and live as the Patriarchs had lived before.

Q. What was the house in which God dwelt at first with his people?

A. It was a Tabernacle set up in the wilderness.

Q. Why did God dwell in such a place?

A. To shew that he would be a stranger upon earth as we are, and dwell in the tabernacle of a mortal body.

Q. What are we to learn from these things?

A. That all the servants of God are to renounce the world, and live like strangers upon earth.

Q. What do they hope for by so doing?

A. They prepare themselves for a better inheritance in heaven.

Q. Why does the Apostle call our bodies *tabernacles?*

A. Because we lead a travelling life in them, and they are soon to be taken down, as a tent is.

Q. How do the children of this world live?

A. They build houses and buy lands, as if they were to live for ever; when perhaps their tent may be taken down this night, and their soul required of them.

Q. What is the best improvement of this and other subjects of the Scripture ?

A. To make a prayer to God upon them.

THE TEXTS.

Gen. xiii. 18. xxv. 27. Numb. x. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 6. Jer. chap. xxxv. John i. 14. Acts vii. 1, &c. Heb. xi. 9. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

IV. THE CHAPTER OF WAR.

What a strange thing is war ! yet we see it every where ; and we ourselves are engaged in it, whether we will or not. There is war in the natural creation ; the hawk is always in arms for the seizing of his prey ; the lion and the wolf are at war with cattle ; birds and beasts are persecuting one another ; and the innocent are destroyed by the cruel and the rapacious. Even in seas and rivers there are greedy monsters, which devour other kinds when they are within their reach. If we turn our eyes to mankind, we see nation rising in arms against nation, and kingdoms divided against themselves. And why is all this permitted ?—For many wise reasons ; but for this above all, that, from the enemies we see, we may consider the enemies we do not see. For the invisible world is also at war ; *there was war in heaven :* God himself hath his enemies among Angels that excel in strength ; principalities and powers are confederate against all the great and merciful designs of Heaven ; and the war, which they began there, is carried on upon earth against us

men and our salvation. We are therefore born to a state of war, and are accordingly enlisted as soldiers at our baptism; and Jesus Christ is the *captain of our salvation,* under whose banner we are to fight against his and our enemies. Our Christian profession is called a *fight of faith:* because it is subject to all the dangers, losses, fears, and miscarriages of war; and the same rules are to be observed, the same measures to be followed, in the one case as in the other; with this difference, that ghostly dangers are a thousand times worse than bodily, and call for more valour and more vigilance. Being therefore soldiers, we are to do as soldiers do.

1. We are to put on the whole armour of God. There is the helmet to save the head in natural war; and there is the protection of God, the *helmet of salvation,* in spiritual war. There is the *shield of faith,* which we are to hold up against the fiery darts of the enemy. There is the sword of the spirit, the word of God, *sharper than any two-edged sword,* which, when skilfully used, will give mortal wounds to the adversaries of our faith.

2. We must practise the prudence which is necessary in earthly war; considering that we are here in an enemy's country, in continual danger of being surprised by evil spirits who are always upon the watch; and therefore obliged to be sober and vigilant. A drunken soldier, in a time of war, is in danger of death; a drunken Christian is in danger of damnation. All levity, and dissipation, and foolish jesting, are to be avoided, as tending to make the mind effeminate and careless, and insensible of its dangerous situation in this life; in consideration of which, we are to *pass the time of our sojourning here in fear,* as they do who are encompassed with enemies.

3. We are to study the interests of the two parties at war. We are to know, that the grand enemy of man, which is the Devil, hath his allies who assist him in his warfare against us: these are the World and the Flesh. The World receives his principles, and works with him, by the great force of custom, fashion, and example; the Flesh warreth against the spirit, and is to be denied and mortified; as we stop and seize the supplies of provision, when they are upon the road to the camp of an enemy.

4. Then, lastly, as the mind of the soldier is intent upon victory, and he runs all hazards to obtain it; so hath the Christian the same object in view; sin and death are to fall before him, and the kingdom of heaven is to be the prize.

All the prospects and chances of the spiritual warfare are to be seen, as in a glass, when we read of the wars of the Hebrews in their progress from Egypt to Canaan; how God fought for them in a case when they could not fight for themselves, and overthrew the Egyptians in the Red Sea. How Jericho fell before the priests; as the world and its power fall before the sound of the Gospel: how Gideon prevailed over the host of Midian with his lamps and his pitchers; as the enemies of the truth are defeated by the light of the word in earthen vessels: how Sisera, that grand enemy of the people of God, fell by the hand of a woman: as the powers of earth and hell are conquered by the faith and fortitude of the Church. From all which, and other like cases, we gather, that, *if God be for us, who can be against us?*

But then, we are to remember, that the same people, whom no force could conquer, no diabolical enchantments could prevail against, were destroyed by the wiles of the enemy, and the bewitching power of

temptations from bad company, with the false doctrines and idolatrous festivals of heathenism: all which dangers await us every hour of our lives. *He that endureth to the end shall be saved:* and then our Captain shall settle us, as Joshua did the people, in the promised land: the *Lord himself,* like him who shouted and sounded for the fall of Jericho, *shall descend from heaven with the shout* of the angelic host, and the trumpet of victory shall be sounded; every enemy shall be cast under our feet, and we shall pass with triumph from this world of fear and danger, to reign with the Conqueror in his glorious kingdom. This is the great subject of Christian triumph and thanksgiving, all expressed in these few words of the Apostle—*thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What are we to learn from the consideration of *war?*

A. That we have ghostly enemies, against whom we are to be constantly in arms.

Q. Who are these enemies?

A. The Devil and his angels, who oppose the great work of God for the salvation of man.

Q. What are we made at our baptism?

A. Soldiers of Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation.

Q. What is the Christian profession called?

A. The fight of *faith,* which alone can give us the victory.

Q. Is man able by his own strength to oppose his spiritual adversaries?

A. He knows nothing about them till God warns him of his danger.

Q. How are we to stand against these enemies?

A. As soldiers do in war.

Q. What are the arms of the spiritual warfare?

A. The helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit.

Q. What temper of mind are we to preserve?

A. We are to be sober, and vigilant, and fearful of a surprize.

Q. Which are the three great enemies of man?

A. The Devil, the World, and the Flesh.

Q. How are you to defend yourself against the Devil?

A. To resist him, steadfast in the faith.

Q. How against the World?

A. Never to take its word, or admit of its authority.

Q. How against the Flesh?

A. By mortification, abstinence, and self-denial.

Q. What is the great object to a Christian soldier?

A. The hope of a victory over sin and death, and of obtaining the kingdom of heaven, the prize of our calling.

Q. Where may we see and learn the nature of the Christian warfare?

A. From the wars of the Hebrews in the Scripture.

Q. From what events in particular?

A. From the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the sea.

Q. From what others?

A. From the fall of Jericho, the defeat of the Midianites, the death of Sisera, &c.

Q. What do you infer from these things?

A. That God still fighteth for us, and that all his enemies shall perish as these did.

Q. When the king of Moab could prevail against the Israelites neither by force nor enchantments, what was done?

A. They were destroyed by the allurements of bad company.

Q. What will happen when Jesus Christ shall triumph over all his enemies?

A. He shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the sound of the last trumpet.

Q. How was this foreshown?

A. Jericho, for a pattern to us, fell before Joshua with the same circumstances.

THE QUESTIONS.

Rev. xii. 7. *There was war in heaven.*

2 Tim. ii. 3. *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life.*

Eph. vi. 13. *Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.*

2 Cor. x. 3. *We do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal: but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.*

Josh. x. 24. *Put your feet upon the necks of these kings.*

Rom. xvi. 20. *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*

1 Thess. iv. 16. *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.*

V. THE CHAPTER OF THE POTTER.

The Potter maketh vessels out of clay, and fashioneth them as he pleases. Some are great, and some are small; some are made to honour, and some to dishonour. All things made of earth are frail, and easily broken; and though they are finely figured, and painted, and gilded, they are but earth still, and a fall destroys them.

I come from the hands of my Maker as clay from the hands of the Potter, and am called a vessel, because I have a capacity to hold either good or evil. In the language of the Scripture a person and a vessel are the same thing. Paul is called a *chosen vessel;* and he exhorts the husband to give honour to the wife as to the *weaker vessel.*

The same power which formed me hath wisely given unto me my station and my use in this life. As the clay doth not reply against the will of the Potter, so must I not find fault with the state of life to which God hath called me, but conform myself to it, and be useful in my place. I shall still be happy and respectable, if I do my duty in an inferior station, and fulfil the will of God, which is the great end of man's being in this world, and his greatest honour in every state of life. O how vain is it for man to resist God, and exalt himself against him! What is all the power of this world, when it opposes the designs of heaven?

It is a vain rage which brings destruction upon itself; it is a *potter's vessel* boasting itself against a *rod of iron,* which can break it in pieces with a touch.

In respect to his mortality, no man is superior to another. The rich and the poor, the honourable and dishonourable, must all die. The stroke of death will break them as a potter's vessel: and then the distinction between them is at an end; for the vessel of honour is as useless as the rest, when it is broken.

When I see the fragments lying scattered about in a potter's field, I see the exact pattern of a burying-ground; in which the bones of men lie scattered before the pit, and their bodies are again mixed with the clay out of which they were made. But to give me hope under the consideration of this my mortal frailty, the *Potter's field* was purchased with the price of him that was valued, as a proper place to *bury strangers in.* Therefore if I live and die in faith, as a *pilgrim and stranger upon earth,* it matters not where my body is buried, because my burying-place, wherever it may chance to be, is paid for with the blood of Christ; and I shall rest in this assurance, that although I have *lien among the pots,* a broken vessel in appearance, cast away and forgotten, yet is my immortality secure, and I shall rise as with the *wings of a dove,* and be glorified as with *colours of gold.* From being a vessel of earth, I shall be as that vessel of gold which held the hidden manna; and as that was placed in the holy of holies, so shall I be translated to the heavenly sanctuary.

If then, I who am a weak and frail mortal, am capable of being thus raised and glorified in the vessel of my body, how careful should I be to keep it *in sanctification and honour,* and not live *in the*

lust of concupiscence as the Gentiles did, who knew not God, nor Jesus Christ, nor the power of his resurrection.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is the work of a potter?

A. He maketh vessels out of clay, and fashioneth them as he pleases.

Q. Why is God compared to a potter?

A. Because he forms man out of the clay, and appoints every one to his station and use in life.

Q. Why is man called a vessel?

A. Because he is capable of holding that which is put into him, whether it be good or evil.

Q. How ought we to submit to God's appointment?

A. It is as vain to find fault with the state to which he has called us, as it would be for a vessel of earth to dispute against him that formeth it.

Q. In what sense are all Christians, vessels of honour?

A. Because the grace of God, or spirit of life, is given to Christians of every degree.

Q. In what respect are all men equal?

A. They are all made of the same clay, and death shall break them all in pieces.

Q. What may we liken to a potter's yard, with fragments scattered about it?

A. A church-yard or burying-ground.

Q. Was such a place ever set apart for burials?

A. The potter's field at Jerusalem was purchased with the price of Christ's death, to bury strangers in.

Q. What may that teach us?

A. That if we live by faith, as strangers in this world, we may rest in hope at our death.

Q. Why so?

A. Because the place to bury strangers in was paid for with the price of Christ's innocent blood.

Q. And what is our hope in death?

A. That, although we lie as broken earthen vessels, we shall be restored and glorified at the resurrection.

Q. How ought we then to regard and keep this vessel our body?

A. We ought to keep it *in sanctification and honour*, not in *the lust of concupiscence*, as *Heathens* did, who had not this hope.

THE TEXTS.

Jer. xviii. 6. *Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel.*

Rom. ix. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

2 Cor. iv. 7. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels.*

Matt. xxvii. 7. *And they took counsel, and bought with them the Potter's field to bury strangers in.*

Psalm lxviii. 13. *Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold.*

1 Thess. iv. 4. *That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.*

VI. THE CHAPTER OF REDEMPTION.

To *redeem* is to buy a captive back again with a price from slavery; as poor Christians often are, when they have been unfortunately taken at sea by barbarous Turks and Moors.

My Catechism hath taught me that *God the Son hath redeemed me.* What am I then, without being redeemed, but a slave and a captive? My person is forfeited to God for sin, and under sentence of death: and my soul is under the power of Satan, to follow sin with my heart and affections, and live in the service of it; neither is there any liberty for me, till *the Son shall make me free,* and redeem me from the power of Satan unto God. Such as the Hebrews were in the house of bondage before Moses came to deliver them, such am I in the Egypt of this wicked world, if I am without a Saviour. They were delivered from death by the blood of the Passover; and I have redemption through the blood of Christ. I am not redeemed with silver or gold, as worldly captives are, but by the precious blood of Christ, the lamb of God, who gave himself a ransom for us all, and took away the sin of the world.

The unbelieving Jews, blinded with ignorance, boasted that they were never in bondage; not understanding that they were born in sin, and that a life of sin is a life of slavery, from which nothing but the grace of God in Jesus Christ can deliver us. Some Christians are as proud and as blind as the Jews were, with no knowledge of the bondage of sin, nor of the necessity of a sacrifice to be offered, a price to be paid, an atonement to be made for all those that shall

be saved. The vain traditions of their fathers destroyed those Jews; and the vain deceit of human philosophy destroys these Christians. When the slave is drunk, he dances about, and forgets his condition; and when the mind of a Christian is drunk with the pride of false doctrine, he thinks himself free, and forgets his Redeemer. O Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may see the misery of my nature, and know the value of my ransom, and find in thy service the true *liberty of the sons of God.*

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What do you mean by the *redeeming* of mankind?

A. To *redeem* is to buy a person back again from a state of captivity, by paying a ransom for him.

Q. What ransom did God take for the Hebrews, when the Egyptians were slain by the destroying Angel?

A. The blood of a lamb.

Q. And what ransom does he take, to save you from death?

A. The blood of Christ.

Q. Man is then a slave by nature?

A. He is a slave to sin, and through the fear of death is all his life-time subject to bondage.

Q. Whose power are sinners under?

A. They are under the power of Satan, as the afflicted Hebrews were under the power of Pharaoh.

Q. What was Egypt to the Hebrews?

A. It was the house of bondage.

Q. And what is your house of bondage?

A. This wicked world.

Q. What is liberty?

A. The liberty of serving our own lusts.

Q. What is perfect freedom?

A. The service of God.

Q. Why so?

A. Because it delivers us from the tyranny and torment of our own lusts and passions.

Q. Why did the Jews boast that they were free?

A. Because they did not understand that they were born in sin, and lived under the bondage of it.

Q. Why do Christians deny that we are born in sin?

A. Because they trust to the vain deceit of philosophy, which is the religion of human pride.

Q. What did the Hebrews do when they were brought out of Egypt?

A. They served God, without fear of these wicked people.

Q. And what are we to do whom Christ hath redeemed?

A. To keep God's commandments, without fearing the people of this world.

THE TEXTS.

Rom. vii. 14. *But I am carnal, sold under sin.*

23. *Bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.*

24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

Eph. i. 7. *We have redemption through his blood.*

1 Cor. vi. 20. *Ye are bought with a price.*

Rev. v. 9. *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*

1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold—but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.*

Exod. i. 13. *And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage.*

Exod. xx. 2. *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt out of the house of bondage.*

Luke i. 68. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.*

John viii. 33. *We were never in bondage.*

38. *If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Eph. iv. 8. *He led captivity captive.*—i. e. He enslaved him who had enslaved us.

VII. THE CHAPTER OF THE WILDERNESS.

When I read of the journey of the Hebrews from Egypt to Canaan by the way of the wilderness, I see a pattern of my own life, and of all the trials I am to undergo as a Christian, in my progress through this world to the kingdom of heaven. Their journey began with their baptism in the Red Sea; and as that baptism was a deliverance from Pharaoh and his host; so is my baptism, with which my Christian life begins, an escape from the power of sin. As they were supported by manna and the waters of the rock; so must I live by bread from heaven, and my thirst must be satisfied with the waters of life. The end of this my

pilgrimage upon earth is the possession of the heavenly land which God hath promised to me; but in the way to it, I must undergo trials and temptations of every sort, and die in this wilderness, as Moses and his people did, before I can attain it. As they proceeded by encampments, and wandered many years in the wilderness; so is my life a pilgrimage; and their example assures me, that I have here no abiding-place, no fixed habitation.

They became tired of eating manna, and wished to return back to Egypt, the place of their captivity; and I am in danger of returning to this sinful world, which I renounced and forsook at my baptism. In my way, I am to meet with enemies, who my fearful heart will magnify and represent as giants, never to be faced and conquered: but still, if *God be for me,* as he was with the Israelites, when they fought against the sons of Anak, *who can be against me?* Greater is he that is with us, than he that is with the world.

Heathen doctrines and customs may debauch and draw away my mind from truth, and lead me into uncleanness of life; as the Israelites were led astray by the idolatry and licentiousness of the wicked Moabites. The danger of ill company will always be near at hand through life; as the mixed multitude of unruly people, who followed the camp in the wilderness, were always propagating some mischief among the congregation.

My heart may be infected by the spiritual pride of *Corah* and his company, and I may fall into the presumptuous sins of schism and rebellion. If a man be above the sins of the body, other temptations take place upon the mind; he begins to conceive highly of his own holiness; and his next step is to heresy and pride of opinion.

When I read, that the soul of the people was discouraged by the length of the way through which it pleased God to lead them about, by journeyings backwards and forwards; thence I am to learn, that I also may faint and fall by the way, for want of patience and perseverance. Many begin well, and go on so for a time; but by and by they are offended and wearied, and will walk in the ways of God no longer; therefore I am not only to begin my course in this wilderness, but to *endure unto the end,* and so shall I *be saved.*

Of these trials and dangers, and of many others, do I see an instructive pattern in the history of the people whom God led through the wilderness. O that I may be wise, to consider and apply what the blessed Apostle St. Paul hath taught me: that *all these things happened unto them for our ensamples, and are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world* (the accomplishment of all that went before) *are come; wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth* (for this is the great lesson I am to learn) *take heed lest he fall.* 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What do you see in the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness?

A. I see a pattern of all the trials and dangers of the Christian life.

Q. How does your journey begin?

A. With baptism, as theirs did.

Q. How were they supported?

A. By manna: and I must also live by bread from heaven.

Q. Of what did they drink?

A. Of that spiritual rock, Christ, from whom we also have the waters of life.

Q. How did the people relish the heavenly manna?

A. They became weary of it, and wished to eat flesh again in Egypt.

Q. And how are you under the like temptation?

A. My heart may be tempted to return from the spiritual life of Christianity, to the carnal life of the world.

Q. Did not the people fear the enemies that were in their way?

A. Yes: they were terrified at the sons of Anak, as I am apt to be terrified at the enemies of my salvation.

Q. How are you to be supported?

A. By an assurance that he who assisted them will assist me against every enemy.

Q. By what may you be led aside?

A. By the false doctrines and customs of this wicked world.

Q. Who was Balaam?

A. A mercenary prophet, who suffered himself to be hired to curse the Church of God.

Q. What became of him?

A. He was destroyed in battle, as all the enemies of God's Church shall perish at last.

Q. Who were the mixed multitude?

A. A set of carnal strolling people, whose evil example was often followed by the congregation.

Q. Who was *Corah?*

A. A rebellious Levite, who claimed an authority against Moses and Aaron.

Q. What are you to learn from the impatience of the people, who were wearied by the length of the way?

A. That I am never to be weary of well-doing, nor of following God in the way of his commandments.

Q. On what are you to depend?

A. On the presence of God attending me through this wilderness; for he who was with Moses and Joshua leading his people into Canaan, will also *guide my feet into the way of peace.*

THE TEXTS.

1 Cor. x. 1, 2. *All our fathers were baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea.*

3. *They did all eat the same spiritual meat.*

4. *And did all drink the same spiritual drink.*

5. *With many of them God was not well pleased.*

6. *These things were our examples.*

13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man.*

VIII. THE CHAPTER OF DEATH.

WHAT could our Saviour mean, when he said, *let the dead bury their dead?* How can one dead man bury another? This can never be, unless the word *dead* be taken in two different senses; for then, a man who is dead in one sense, may be buried by another, who in a different sense is as dead as he: that is, *dead in trespasses and sins.* To be carnally-minded is *death,* saith the Apostle; and the poor prodigal son in the parable, having lived in that state of mind till

his conversion, the father says of him, This thy brother *was dead and is alive again.*

Man has a soul and a body, each of which dies in its own way; and so either of them may be alive while the other is dead. This case gives occasion to many strange sayings in the Scripture. There is a sense in which Adam died on the day when he sinned; and there is another sense in which Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years. Adam delivered down a natural life to all us that are born of him; but the only inheritance he could leave to our spirits, was that death to which he was fallen. It is this death of the spirit which makes it necessary for every man to be born again. We are baptized, that we may have a new life from the Spirit of God; and when it is begun, it must be kept up by the means of grace; as the living seed which is hid under the earth is brought forward by the powers of heaven, which can reach it there, and act upon it. The means of grace by which the Christian life is nourished, are—prayer, the word of God, the Lord's Supper, the ordinance of the Church, the company and conversation of godly people, with an awful attention to the providence of God over our lives and actions, for correction and preservation; yea, and even the wicked, who have no grace in themselves, do often increase it in other men by their hatred and persecution. Among the means of grace we are likewise to reckon self-denial and mortification; and also the sickness and pains of the body, which are frequently made such to those who suffer them; according to what the pious king Hezekiah said of his own case—*In all these things is the life of my spirit.* Isa. xxxviii. 16.

If a Christian lives, he will breathe, like a man alive; he will aspire to God and heaven in his affec-

tions, and be *fervent in prayer:* he will talk like a man alive; and his speech will be edifying, and minister grace to the hearers: he will eat and drink; and his food will be the food of the mind, the *hidden manna,* the bread which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world; he will eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood: there will be in him all the signs of spiritual life and growth; and he who thus liveth and believeth *shall never die.*

On the contrary, there are multitudes of people who seem to live, but are no better than dead; and they might as well be in their graves: they are, properly speaking, *unburied dead.* They have in them nothing of the life of the Gospel, nor any symptoms of it; no sight, no sense of spiritual things, no appetite, no affection. This we shall find, if we make trial of them. We may preach to them all day long, and do no more good by it, than if we were to preach to a man in his coffin. If we were to cry into their years, or blow a trumpet, to give them warning of the fire of judgment and of eternal damnation, they would hear nothing.

If we were to watch them night and morning, we should find that they never open their lips in prayer to God. Shew them the wonders of his word, they see nothing: the sun of the noon-day shines upon the eyes of a dead man, without any effect, unless it be that of making him stink the sooner. If we offer to them the bread of life, they want it not; for a dead man hath no appetite. Were the souls of men as visible as their bodies, we should see as much difference betwixt devout Christians, and the children of this world, as betwixt a living healthy body and a dead corpse. And now I think we may fully understand the meaning of those words which the Apostle borrows from the pro-

phet—*Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

That we may escape this most dreadful of deaths, we are to consider; that as he who standeth may fall, so he that now liveth may be dead; *twice dead,* as St. Jude speaketh; dead once by nature, and dead again unto grace. The pleasures of this world will extinguish the life of a Christian—*She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.* When an affection to this world enters into the mind, and takes possession of it, all heavenly affections will die in it. The envy and pride of false wisdom will put out the eyes of the mind, as in the Scribes and Pharisees of old, who were incapable of the love of truth. In short, whatever tends to *quench the Spirit* and *choke the word,* does in effect destroy the life of God in the soul of man.

Deliver me, O Lord, from this death! and grant that, being dead to sin and to the world, and buried with Christ by baptism, I may serve thee as a *new creature* in *newness of life.* If I forget thee, and become cold in my affections, and my spiritual life should ever be in danger of decay, let me hear that voice which called the dead to life—*Lazarus, come forth—young man, I say unto thee, arise—Talitha cumi.*

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What did our Saviour mean when he said, *Let the dead bury their dead?*

A. He meant, that all they whose souls are dead in sin, are fitly employed when they are burying dead bodies.

Q. Can the soul die while the body lives?

A. It may be as senseless to all heavenly things, as a dead body is to the things of this world.

Q. If Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, how is it true that he died on the day when he sinned?

A. He died in spirit.

Q. Why is it necessary for us to be born again?

A. Because, as the children of Adam, we are born spiritually dead.

Q. When God gives us a new life, how are we to preserve it?

A. By the means of grace, and by walking in newness of life and manners.

Q. What does our Saviour mean when he says, *He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die?* How can that be, since it is *appointed to all men once to die?*

A. They who live unto God never die; and they who are dead unto God never live.

Q. In what sense is a Christian dead while he is alive?

A. He is dead to sin and to the world; dead with Christ by faith.

Q. How does it appear that wicked men are dead?

A. Because their eyes receive no benefit from the light of God's word.

Q. Have they any hearing?

A. They are as deaf to the Gospel as if they were dead.

Q. Have they any appetite?

A. They neither hunger nor thirst after righteousness.

Q. Are they also dumb?

A. Yes; because they never say their prayers.

Q. How do men fall into this death?

A. By neglecting the means of grace.

Q. Who are they that are dead while they live?

A. They who are carnally-minded and live in pleasure.

Q. How then ought we to live?

A. To avoid all things that quench the spirit and choke the word of God.

Q. If we should find our spiritual life decaying within us, what will do us good?

A. To think we hear Jesus Christ calling to us, as he did to Lazarus and other dead people, to arise and come forth from our sins.

THE TEXTS.

Matt. viii. 22. *Let the dead bury their dead.*

Eph. ii. 1. *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

Gen. ii. 17. *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Luke xv. 32. *This thy brother was dead, and is alive again.*

Rom. vi. 13. *Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.*

4. *We are buried with him by baptism into death.*

1 Cor. xv. 31. *I die daily.*

John viii. 51. *If a man hear my sayings, he shall never see death.*

IX. THE CHAPTER OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON.

The fate of the disobedient Jews, and of all unprofitable Christians, is set before me in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son. The state of the Gospel, being intended for the life and happiness of

all that are called to it, is thence to be understood as a state of mirth and enjoyment; and it is accordingly represented as a plenteous feast on occasion of a great and honourable marriage, to which people of all sorts are invited. God, the King of kings, ordained the union of his Son Jesus Christ with the Church; and, at the celebration of this mystical marriage, a feast is prepared of oxen and fatlings; and all things are made ready for the guests. The Gospel hath its feast (for, saith the Apostle, *let us keep the feast*) in which all the sacrifices of the law are fulfilled in the one sacrifice of Christ, which we commemorate in the Christian Church.

But how do men accept of God's gracious invitation? The Jews, who are the people first bidden to the feast, were men given up to the world, and as such made light of it, and followed their business. Others, full of the pride and spite of false doctrine, rose up against the messengers of God, and persecuted them even unto death; for this wickedness God, in his wrath against them, sent forth the armies of the Romans to destroy those murderers, and burn up their city Jerusalem. They are called murderers because they crucified Jesus Christ, as they had slain the prophets before; and so all the righteous blood shed upon the earth was to be revenged upon them. They were visited, as is here said; and their city was burned with fire.

These, to whom the word of God was first preached, being found unworthy, the Apostles of Jesus Christ were commanded to turn to the Gentiles. The parable saith, the servants of the king were then sent out into the highways, that is, from Judea into all the world, to bring in as many as they could find, without exception of any. The Church of Christ does there-

fore include persons of all characters, and people of all nations (according to another parable, which compares the kingdom of heaven to a net cast into the sea, which gathereth of every kind, both bad and good) which remain together till the separation is made. For the day of inquisition cometh, when the King comes in to visit his church, and examine into the character of all his guests. There he finds those who are at a wedding without a wedding garment; who are in the Church of Christ, assembled with other people, and yet are no Christians. Anciently, at baptism, a white garment was put upon those who were admitted into the Church, as a sign of their sanctification, and a lesson to purity: but as the swine, when it is cleansed returns to its wallowing in the mire; so do many Christians forfeit the purity of the Christian character. When the question shall be put to such, how they came into the Church without repenting of their sins; what shall they say for themselves? The case is so plain, that the Christian profession will not consist with a sinful life, that they shall stand speechless, confounded, and self-condemned. Men can make many fair speeches in excuse for themselves now; but they will not dare to say to God what they say to one another. They who walk unworthy of their vocation, will have their lot with those who rejected the Gospel. As the Jews were visited with fire and sword; so the unprofitable Christian, who boasted of his liberty, will be bound hand and foot, as an unworthy slave, and cast into outward darkness, into the regions of torment, where the blessed light of God's presence doth not reach, to give life and comfort; but misery and despair dwell for ever and ever.

I am therefore to consider, that all are not Israel that are of Israel; all were not Jews that were circum-

cised; all are not Christians that have been brought by baptism into the Church; for many are called, but few are chosen. Under the present state of things, bad and good are together at the marriage feast of the Gospel; and many of those who are now *called* to be among the rest, will not be *chosen* at last as fit for the kingdom of God. I am therefore not to depend upon any privileges I have at present, unless I use them right; and must give all diligence to *make my calling and election sure.*

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Who is meant by the *King* in this parable?

A. *God,* the King of Heaven.

Q. Who is the *King's Son?*

A. Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Q. What does the *marriage* signify?

A. The union of Christ with the Church.

Q. What is the marriage feast?

A. The feast of the Christian Passover, in which all the sacrifices of the law are fulfilled.

Q. What was meant by the turning of water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee?

A. The new doctrine of the Gospel, or the spirit of the law of Moses, kept till the latter time of Christ's coming into the world.

Q. Who were the *servants,* whom God sent out to invite men to this feast?

A. The *ministers* and *preachers* of the word.

Q. How were they received by those to whom they were sent?

A. They were persecuted, and put to death.

Q. What makes men despise the invitation which God sends to them by his ministers?

A. Too much attention to this world; which becomes so important to those who are engaged by it, that they make light of another.

Q. Who were the people to whom the messengers of God were first sent?

A. The Jews.

Q. Which was their city?

A. Jerusalem.

Q. What armies were they, whom the King in his wrath sent against them?

A. The armies of the *Romans.*

Q. Why are the Jews called *murderers?*

A. Because they killed the Prophets, and crucified Christ, and persecuted his Apostles.

Q. How was Jerusalem destroyed?

A. It was burned with fire.

Q. What is meant by the *high ways,* to which the servants of God were sent?

A. The wide world of the Gentiles.

Q. Of what sort are the guests who attend the feast?

A. People of all nations and of all characters, both bad and good.

Q. Doth the Church of God comprehend bad people?

A. The kingdom of heaven is as a net cast into the sea; and the bad are not separated from the good, till it is brought to shore at last.

Q. When will the King come in to see his guests?

A. At the day of judgment, when all they will be found out who are unworthy of a place in the Church.

Q. What is the wedding garment?

A. A garment of white, to signify the purity necessary to the Christian character.

Q. What excuse will wicked men make for themselves at last?

A. They will be condemned of their consciences, and have nothing to say.

Q. What is *outer darkness?*

A. The place of torment, to which the light of the kingdom of heaven does not reach.

Q. How can a person be *called* without being chosen?

A. He may be called to the feast, and found unworthy at last.

Q. What is then the duty of all who are called into the Church of God?

A. To *make their calling and election sure.*

THE TEXT.

Matt. xxii. 1. &c. or the Gospel for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

X. THE CHAPTER OF THE PASSOVER.

Such as the children of Israel were in the house of bondage, such am I in this world. They were employed to work in clay and mortar, under cruel taskmasters; and I am bound to the works of sin, which are base and miserable, till I am redeemed from the power of Satan unto God. But from the tyranny of Pharaoh, God was pleased to deliver his people by the hand of Moses, when they had offered the Passover.

If the children of Israel had refused or neglected to sacrifice the Passover, they would have died as the

Egyptians did: and what else will become of me, unless I keep the feast of the true Passover Jesus Christ; who is to me and to all Christians what that Lamb was to the people of God in Egypt.

Some of the ceremonies, with which the Passover was offered, are to teach me what Jesus Christ was to be, and what he should do for me; and others are to teach me, what I am to do for myself, and for him. The Passover was a Lamb; and he is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Its blood was sprinkled on the posts of their doors; and his blood was sprinkled on the wood of his cross; it was without blemish, as he was without spot of sin. A bone of it was not to be broken; and therefore a bone of him was not broken at his death upon the cross. Its blood turned away from the Hebrews the wrath which fell upon the Egyptians; and I also *have redemption through his blood.*

As to myself, my duty is plain from the nature of the case; that unless I celebrate the Passover, the *wrath of God* will *abide* upon me. Without eating and drinking, my body has no life; and my soul will have none, unless I eat spiritual meat, and drink spiritual drink. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,* said the Passover himself (John vi. 53.) In like manner as the Hebrews kept this feast, so must I. They kept it with eating *bitter herbs;* and I must keep it with wholesome mortification and true repentance. They eat *unleavened bread;* so must *I put away the leaven of malice* and *wickedness* and pharisaical *hypocrisy,* and keep this feast with the *unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* If they had their *shoes* on their feet, and their *staves* in their hands, as being ready to take their journey out of Egypt; so must I remember that this

life is a journey, and that I am hasting to go out, and be delivered from this land of bondage.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What were the children of Israel commanded to do, that they might be saved from the destruction which fell upon the Egyptians ?

A. They were commanded to sacrifice the Passover.

Q. What would have happened to them if they had not done this ?

A. They would have died as the Egyptians did.

Q. What did they do with the blood of it ?

A. They sprinkled it upon the door posts of their houses.

Q. Who is your Passover ?

A. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Q. Where was his blood sprinkled ?

A. Upon the wood of his cross.

Q. And what is the effect of it ?

A. The wrath of God, which abideth upon this wicked world, is turned away from Christians.

Q. Why was the Lamb to be perfect, and without blemish ?

A. Because Christ was to be without sin.

Q. Why were they ordered not to break a bone of it ?

A. Because the bones of Christ should not be broken on the cross, with those of the two malefactors.

Q. After they had offered the blood of the Passover, what did they do ?

A. They did eat the flesh of it.

Q. And what are we to do ?

A. Christ our Passover being sacrificed for us, we are to keep the feast.

Q. How are we to keep it?

A. We are to keep it in truth, as the Hebrews kept it in figure.

Q. With what ceremonies did they keep it?

A. With eating unleavened bread, and bitter herbs; and having their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands.

Q. What are you taught by these things?

A. That I am to put away malice and wickedness, and mortify the deeds of the body, and celebrate the Lord's Supper in sincerity and truth.

Q. What else?

A. I am to remember, that life is a journey, and that I am a pilgrim and a stranger, hasting to be delivered from this house of bondage.

THE TEXTS.

1 Cor. v. 7. *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast. Not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Exod. xii. 3—30.

John xix. 36. *These things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.*

XI. THE CHAPTER OF THE VINEYARD.

THE prophet *Isaiah* describes the favour of God to his Church, and his judgment upon its disobedience, under the parable of a Vineyard, well planted and

cultivated, but bringing forth sour grapes, and therefore given up to be devoured and trodden down by evil beasts.

The fruitful hill, on which this vineyard was planted, is the Hill of Zion, to which all the blessings of eternal life were promised. As a vineyard is fenced; so was the Church of God separated from the Gentiles; who were cast out of Canaan to make way for the people of God, as the stones are cast out of the ground where a vine is to be planted. The choice vine signifies the children of Abraham, of the most godly stock, brought out of Egypt and settled in Canaan. The tower of the Vineyard is the Church; the wine-press is made to receive the fruits of good works; but as wild and sour grapes are not accepted by the husbandman to make wine of; so evil works are hateful to God, and occasion the destruction of his Church. When Jerusalem had sinned, the fence of the Vineyard was taken away, and the heathens were let in upon it. The first temple was destroyed, and the Jews were carried captive to Babylon; as the second temple was afterwards destroyed by the Romans: and Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles to this day. Briars and thorns now grow in the Vineyard of God; a wild and unprofitable generation of unbelievers have possession of the country. As the showers of heaven fall to no purpose on a barren land; so God withholds his grace from a wicked people.

Every Christian Church must expect to be visited as Jerusalem was, when it is no longer worthy of the grace of God; and I must expect that he will deal with me, and with every one of his children singly, as with the Church at large; for his ways are just and equal to all. If I am fruitful as a good vine, I shall continue to be a branch in Jesus Christ; and being

planted on earth, I shall flourish in the courts of heaven: but if I bring forth wild grapes, till I can no longer be reformed by pruning and wholesome correction, I shall be given up to the enemies of my salvation: I shall be rooted up, and cast forth as a branch fit for nothing but the fire. Every man's salvation is from God; but every man's destruction is from himself. What could be done more for a vineyard than hath been done for me? Therefore if I should be judged of God, his judgment will be just; and all men, even I myself, must confess it so to be at last.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is the vineyard in the parable of Isaiah?
A. The Church of Jerusalem.
Q. What is the fruitful hill?
A. Mount Sion on which the Church was built.
Q. What is the fencing of the vineyard?
A. The separating it from the Heathen nations.
Q. Who were the stones that were cast out of it?
A. The heathen Canaanites.
Q. Why are they called stones?
A. Because people out of God's Church are hard, and incapable of bringing forth any fruit.
Q. What was the choice vine?
A. The stock of Abraham.
Q. What is the tower?
A. The temple.
Q. What is the use of a wine-press?
A. To receive the fruits of the vineyard.
Q. What are these fruits?
A. Good works.
Q. What are wild grapes?

A. Evil works; the fruits of man's nature without grace.

Q. What is meant by taking away the hedge?

A. Letting in heathen enemies to devour it.

Q. What doth Christ say of Jerusalem?

A. That it should be trodden down of the Gentiles.

Q. How doth God prune a vine in a spiritual sense?

A. By correction and wholesome punishment for sin.

Q. Who are briars and thorns?

A. Evil men, whether disobedient Jews, or unbelieving Gentiles.

Q. What is meant by commanding the clouds that there should be no rain?

A. Withdrawing the blessings of divine grace.

Q. What is every Christian to expect who is unfruitful?

A. That God will judge him, as he judged the Church of Jerusalem.

THE TEXTS.

Isaiah v. 1—7. Psalm lxxx. 8—16.

Matt. xxi. 33—41.

John xv. 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*

XII. THE CHAPTER OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

By two brethren of opposite characters, two parties of people are signified; the one good, the other evil. In *Cain*, that wicked wretch, who slew his brother, we have a pattern of the whole world of unbelievers; in *Abel*, of the whole army of persecuted saints and martyrs, from the creation to the day of Judgment. When Rebekah was about to bring forth twins, the Lord said unto her, *Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels.* The same is intended in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Here are *two manner of people*, the Jews and the Gentiles, represented to us under the persons of two brethren, the elder, and the younger: and their characters are suitable in every respect. The Jew is at home, and lives in the house of his father, that is, in the Church of God: the Gentile, who was also in it from the beginning, departs from the true worship, and goes *afar off* into idolatry. The parable shews us, first, what became of him; and secondly, how the Jew behaved upon his brother's repentance and conversion. When the Gentile left the Church of God, he carried off the substance of what he had there been taught; but it was soon wasted, and a famine succeeded, such as the mind suffers, when it has not the word of God to live upon. Thus falling into riot and debauchery, such as was practised by the Heathens, even in their religion, the prodigal becomes fit company for swine, and is disposed to feed as those filthy creatures do. His misery brought him to himself: and he resolved to return to the house of his father; wherein the lowest and the meanest were better provided for than he. The

father remembers no more what he had been, but receives him with tenderness and affection: puts on him *the best robe*—gives him the clothing of righteousness—puts a *ring* on his hand, to signify that he is again adopted for a son—and his feet which were bare are *shod* with the *preparation of the Gospel of peace.* The *fatted calf,* the sacrifice, so long reserved, and in which all other sacrifices were fulfilled, is killed for him; and he partakes of the feast with mirth, and music, and dancing, that is, with all the pleasures of devotion, which are no where to be found but in the house of our Father. He is now raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness: he was *dead,* and is *alive again*—he was *lost,* as a poor straying starved sheep, but is now *found,* and received into the fold.

The proud selfish Jew, seeing the conversion and reception of the Gentiles, is filled with envy instead of charity. *Thy brother is come,* said the servants: but that which gives pleasure to the angels of heaven, the conversion of a sinner, gives no pleasure to an envious mind. When God, of his infinite mercy, *granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life,* the Jews were so angry, that they determined never to come under the same roof with them; and they hold their wicked resolution to this day. They justified themselves, and pleaded that they had *never transgressed;* and that, in return for it, God had used them hardly, and disappointed them; though in fact they had all along enjoyed the privileges of the Church, and had still the first claim to all its promises, if they would accept of them. Ever since the time when they refused to come into the house of their Father, they have been wandering about the *field* of this world. There they are to this day; and there we suppose they will remain; till

the Gentile shall once more turn prodigal, and *his* time also shall be fulfilled.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What does the Scripture signify by two brethren?

A. Two manner of people.

Q. Who are the two brethren in the parable of the Prodigal Son?

A. The Jew and the Gentile.

Q. What became of the Gentile?

A. He turned prodigal, and left the house of his father.

Q. Whither did he go?

A. Afar off into the country of idolatry.

Q. And how did he live there?

A. In spiritual fornication with idols, and in all manner of wickedness.

Q. What is meant by the famine which came upon him?

A. The emptiness of the mind, which has lost the word of God: for *man liveth not by bread alone,* but by the word of the Lord.

Q. What is it to feed swine?

A. To satisfy our own sinful lusts: and he who doth that, is all the while empty himself, and perishing with hunger, because the mind is unsatisfied.

Q. Why is it said, that he *came to himself?*

A. Because he who lives in the pleasures of sin is like a man out of his mind, and so continues, till his sufferings bring him to his senses.

Q. How does his father receive him?

A. As God receives all penitent sinners, who see their own misery, and confess their sins.

Q. What is the best robe?

A. The clothing of righteousness.

Q. Why does the father order a ring to be put on him?

A. To signify that he is restored to honour and authority, as a son in his father's house.

Q. What is meant by the shoes upon his feet?

A. The preparation of the gospel of peace, without which we are not prepared for the journey of life.

Q. What is signified by the fatted calf?

A. The feast of the Altar, or the Christian sacrifice.

Q. How did the Jews behave on the admission of Gentile converts to the Gospel?

A. They were beyond measure offended at it, as the elder brother in the parable.

Q. How do they argue?

A. They justify themselves, and accuse the Gentiles, and are angry with God himself, as if he had used them ill.

Q. What is meant by their refusing to come into the house?

A. Their putting from them the word of life, and refusing to be made members of the Church of Christ.

Q. And where are they now?

A. They are still without the Church of God, and wandering about the field of this world.

Q. What is the change made in a penitent sinner, when God hath received him?

A. He is *passed from death unto life*, and restored as a straying lost sheep to the fold.

Q. What then is a man in the state of sin and impenitence?

A. He is *lost* and *dead.*

THE TEXT.

See Luke xv. 11. &c.

XIII. THE CHAPTER OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Man is never found more worthless than when he boasts of his own dignity; nor more foolish, than when he is proud of his own wisdom. While he saith, I am rich and have need of nothing, God tells him, that he is poor and miserable, and blind and naked. How different are the sentiments of God and man, when man himself is the subject! So low and wretched is the condition of man by his natural birth in *sin*, that sometimes he is said to be *sick* with it, sometimes to be *dead* in it, sometimes to be *possessed* by it, like a man who is raving with an evil spirit.

No words can be too strong to paint the misery of man in this world of sin and sorrow, and the dangers to which he is exposed of perishing here and hereafter. No language can be too exalted to describe the goodness and mercy which from the heaven above hath looked down upon our lost condition, and brought us to a state of health and safety under the terms of the Gospel. Nothing can be plainer than the duty arising from these considerations. If God hath so saved us, we ought also to save one another if we can. He who is thus wonderfully delivered, must have neither sense nor godliness, unless he is disposed to acts of kindness toward his suffering neighbour in all his wants and afflictions. When

Jesus Christ had represented this case to one who consulted him; *Go,* said he, *and do thou likewise.*

Such is the doctrine, and such the duty set before us in the parable of the *Samaritan.* There we learn that man was once in *Jerusalem,* the holy city, and went down from thence to *Jericho,* a city under a curse from God for the sin of its inhabitants: that, in the way from the one to the other, he fell into the hands of the destroyer; who, like a robber on the road, stripped him of his raiment of innocence and righteousness, and *wounded* him, so as to leave him *half dead;* dead in the *spirit,* his better part. We learn farther, that when the *Priest* and the *Levite* (all the religious ministrations of man) see him lying in this condition, they must pass by and leave him as they find him: for the blood of bulls and of goats, which they offer, cannot take away sin. But when the Priest and the Levite are gone by, then, that which they could not do, is done by him who cometh after the law, and is the end of it for righteousness; who, while upon this work of saving mankind, was reviled as a *Samaritan,* and hated as an alien; yet in that Samaritan, so hated and reviled, we see and acknowledge the Saviour of the world. He finds the poor wounded traveller, lying helpless upon this earth, and has *compassion* on him. He pours *oil* and *wine* into his wounds; the oil of the Holy Spirit, which healeth our infirmities, and the blood of redemption, which cleanseth us from all sin. Then he raises him up, sets him on his own beast, (humbles himself, that man may be exalted) and removes him to a place of reception, even to his Church, which, like an *Inn,* admits all that are brought into it. There the *Host,* who is the minister of God, is under a charge to *take care of him,* and is supplied with every thing necessary to restore him and complete the cure.

When our Samaritan shall *come again* this way, as he hath promised to do, then, at his second coming, he will reckon with the host, and *repay* him, and every man, according to his works.

O Lord, if I am this man, so fallen, and so raised up, grant that I may know myself and thee; my own misery, and thy goodness. Let not any false doctrines of human pride keep me ignorant of myself, nor any pleasures of the world tempt me to neglect so great a salvation; that having received the blessings of thy visitation, and followed thy example in doing good according to my ability, I may be rewarded by thy mercy out of thy heavenly treasures; for I believe that thou shalt *come again,* according to thy promise, to *repay* me and every man for what we shall have done, in all those things, and toward all those persons, which thou hast committed to our charge. Amen.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What do we learn from the parable of the Good Samaritan?

A. The fall of man, and his salvation, and our own duty.

Q. How is his fall signified?

A. As a going down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho.*

Q. What is Jerusalem?

A. The holy city, or life of paradise.

Q. What is Jericho?

A. A city under a curse, like this world of sin.

Q. What is it to go down from Jerusalem to Jericho?

A. To depart from paradise into this world.

Q. What happens to man in the way from one to the other?

A. He falls among thieves.

Q. Who are they?

A. The devil and all evil spirits.

Q. What do they do to him?

A. They strip him of his raiment.

Q. What happened to Adam, when he fell into sin?

A. He found himself naked.

Q. What did they do besides?

A. They wounded him.

Q. With what?

A. With sin, which is the sting of death.

Q. Why are they said to have left him *half dead?*

A. Because man, when he fell into sin, did not then die in body, but in spirit, in the better half of him.

Q. Who are the Priest and Levite that see him, and pass by?

A. The ministers of the law, who were to pass away, because their sacrifices could not take away sin.

Q. Who comes after them, to do what the law could not?

A. Jesus Christ, the Saviour of fallen man.

Q. Why does he call himself a *Samaritan?*

A. Because he was hated by the Jews, as the Samaritans were; and they reviled him under the name of a Samaritan; (probably, after the delivery of this parable).

Q. What doth this Samaritan do?

A. He hath compassion on him, and goes to save him.

Q. What does he apply, when he binds up his wounds?

A. Oil and wine; the spirit of life, and the blood of redemption.

Q. What is oil remarkable for?

A. It cures the bite of a serpent.

Q. What is the *Inn* to which the wounded man is carried?

A. The Church.

Q. Who is the *Host* of it?

A. The minister.

Q. What charge is given to him?

A. To take care of those who are committed to him.

Q. And what is he to expect?

A. That he who calls himself the Samaritan, will *come again to repay him.*

Q. What duty are you to learn from this story?

A. To go and do likewise; that is, to shew mercy to others, as Jesus Christ hath shewed mercy to me.

THE TEXT.

Luke x. ver. 25—38.

XIV. THE CHAPTER OF THE PATRIARCH JOSEPH.

NEXT to the history of our blessed Saviour himself, the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis is most wonderful and affecting. When we read how wise and innocent he was, how his father loved him, how his brethren persecuted him, we cannot help

pitying him and loving him. Even the distress of his wicked brethren is attended with such remorse and perplexity, that we pity them also. But when Judah pleads for Benjamin, and Joseph discovers himself, the scene is so affecting, that we cannot refrain from tears. In the three greatest lines of his character and history, he was a most exact figure of our blessed Saviour. He was *innocent;* he was *persecuted;* he was *exalted:* and the life of every servant of God is, and will be, more or less after the same pattern.

When St. *Stephen* pleaded before the Jews, he pointed this story of Joseph against them in such words, that they saw their own wickedness in that of Joseph's brethren, and fell into a rage; gnashing upon him with their teeth for bringing their wickedness home to them in such plain terms. For such as Joseph had been, such was Jesus Christ, whom they had lately crucified; they had done unto him as their forefathers had done to the Patriarch Joseph; whose character in every part of it, bears the strongest testimony to the history of Jesus Christ; so strong, that the Jews, who heard it, were not able to bear it. For saith St. Stephen, *the Patriarchs* (his own brethren), *moved with envy* (as the High Priests were afterwards), *sold* Joseph (as Judas sold our Saviour) into *Egypt;* (delivering him to the *Gentiles* to be evil entreated and punished as a malefactor and a slave). The Patriarch *Judah* was the *seller* of Joseph: and his namesake, *Judas,* sold Jesus Christ. We see Joseph in a prison between two malefactors, and promising life to one of them, as Christ did to one of those who suffered with him. We see him again, cast into a pit; there to be dead and forgotten; but brought alive out of it. His coat was dipped in blood; as Christ wore a purple robe, and appeared as the prophet had

foretold) in dyed garments, stained with the blood of his sufferings.

In Joseph's exaltation, his brethren, who had persecuted him, fell down before him to the ground: and so to Jesus Christ, once mocked and persecuted by his brethren, every knee shall bow. Joseph was made a Saviour to his father and all his house, and fed them with bread according to their families, in a time of famine; as Jesus Christ is the true bread to Jew and Gentile, to whom all the tribes of the earth must come to be nourished unto life eternal.

The character of Joseph preaches to me the same lesson of patience and perseverance, as the example of Jesus Christ doth. It tells me, that if I please my heavenly Father, and am beloved of him, I must expect to be *hated* and *envied* by my *brethren;* that, if I would be *exalted,* I must be *abased;* that, if I keep myself pure, I shall be delivered from those who accuse me falsely; and that if God is with me in my afflictions, I may not only save myself, but be made an instrument of salvation to others; as well strangers, as those of my own family and household.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What think you of the history of Joseph?

A. There is no finer story.

Q. Which are the most affecting parts of it?

A. The return of his brethren in silence to the city as bondmen, when the cup is found upon Benjamin; and the speech of Judah, which moves Joseph to discover himself.

Q. What do the brethren of Joseph impute their distress to?

A. To their iniquity in selling their brother.

Q. Who is it that convicts the Jews of their wickedness against Jesus Christ, from the history of Joseph's sufferings and exaltation?

A. St. Stephen, in the seventh chapter of the Acts.

Q. In what particulars was Joseph a figure of Jesus Christ?

A. In being pure and innocent, and beloved of his father.

Q. In what other?

A. In being persecuted and sold by his brethren, and suffering under a false accusation with two malefactors.

Q. In what others?

A. In many others. He was exalted among heathens, and became a Saviour to them and to his own family.

Q. Do you find any thing of Christ's death and resurrection here?

A. I see Joseph's coat dipped in blood, as of one that had died a cruel death; I see him cast into a pit, there given up to death; but lifted up again out of it.

Q. What must this mean?

A. The same as when Jonah was swallowed up, and cast out again alive from the whale's belly.

Q. Is there any sign here that the Jews will be converted at last?

A. It seems from this history, as if they would see and confess their guiltiness, as the brethren of Joseph did, when the hand of the Lord had tried them.

Q. What other circumstances speak the same thing?

A. St. *Stephen* observes, that Joseph at the *se-*

cond time of their meeting became *known* to his brethren.

Q. What lesson may you learn from the example of Joseph?

A. That if I am loved of God, I shall be envied by my brethren.

Q. But if you keep yourself pure and innocent, what may you expect?

A. I may hope to be delivered under every false accusation.

Q. What do you learn more?

A. I learn to forgive and to do good to those who injure me: as Joseph received his brethren, and never upbraided them with their wickedness.

THE TEXTS.

John i. 11. *He came to his own, and his own received him not.*

Acts vii. 9. *The Patriarchs moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions.*

51. *As your fathers did, so do ye.*

52. *Which of the prophets, have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One.*

XV. THE CHAPTER OF MOSES.

Did not Moses himself forewarn the people, that the Lord would *raise up a like prophet unto him?* Therefore, when I see what Moses was, I may thence know

what Christ was to be. So the Apostle St. Paul tells us, that Moses, as the servant of God, was a faithful minister in his house, for a *testimony* of those things which were to be spoken afterwards (Heb. iii. 5.) So that if we look to the ministry of Moses, we shall find it *bearing witness* to the ministry of Christ; and thence we shall draw the conclusion, that as Moses was sent to deliver the Hebrews, so Jesus Christ came to redeem all mankind. The history of Moses was set before the Jews by St. Stephen in such words, that they could not avoid making the comparison, and drawing the consequence for themselves. His history comprehends the particulars, 1st, of his *birth;* 2d, his *character* as God's minister; 3d, his great *work* in delivering the people; and 4th, the *reception* he met with from his brethren.

When Moses was born, there was an order from a cruel king to kill all the male children; but Moses was miraculously preserved. At the birth of Christ, Herod slew the infants in Bethlehem; but he was saved in Egypt, where Moses had been saved before. As the minister of God he was mighty in words and deeds, which is the very character given of Jesus of Nazareth by the two disciples who were walking to Emmaus. Moses received his authority when God appeared to him, and *spoke* to him, from a *flame of fire* in a bush; and Christ received his honour, when the *voice* came to him *from the excellent Glory* (2 Pet. i. 17). Moses ascended up into the Holy Mount of God, and received the divine law, which he gave to the people; as Christ ascended, and gave the word of his Gospel to be preached by his Apostles, and received by all the people of the world. Moses shewed his power in slaying an Egyptian, as a sign to the people, that God would deliver them from

their enemies by his hand; as Christ shewed his power over Satan, the enemy of mankind, to convince the people that he was sent to be the Saviour of the world. And accordingly, as Moses delivered the people, and brought them out of Egypt, so hath Jesus Christ delivered us from the power of Satan, and brought us out from this wicked world. But, what is the most wonderful of all, and with which St. Stephen confounds the Jews: this great Moses, this mighty worker of miracles, this deliverer of his people from the greatest misery and servitude that ever were upon earth, how was he received? how was he treated? He was *thrust away* and *refused* by his brethren. So was Christ *rejected* by the Jews. Therefore as Moses, though refused and thrust away, was *sent* from God *to be a ruler and deliverer;* so was Jesus Christ, though hated and set at nought by his brethren, and resisted in his mighty works, and condemned and crucified; yet was this same Jesus Christ sent to be the true Messiah. If he had not been *persecuted* and *refused,* he would not have been a *prophet like unto Moses;* if he had not been *sold by his brethren,* he would not have been, as Joseph was, the saviour of his family, and of the Gentile world. All these things considered, I am to remember, first, that I am the disciple of a despised and persecuted Master, and must bear in this world, as Moses did, *the reproach of Christ;* and count it of more value than the favour of a court, or the wealth of the whole world. If I do good, I must be content to be spoken of as an evil doer; if I would be *glorified* with him hereafter, I must *suffer* with him here.

Secondly, I must not regard the humour of the world, nor follow a multitude to do evil; when Moses was absent with God in the Mount, the people below

forgot him, and made a calf and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced at the work of their own hand; so is Jesus Christ forgotten by his people since his departure into heaven: and they sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play; not considering that as Moses came down unlooked for, and executed judgment on the offenders, so will Christ return at an hour when they are not aware, to judge those who have forgotten him, and take vengeance on their impiety and disobedience.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. Who was it that urged for the truth of Christianity against the Jews, from the history of their lawgiver Moses.

A. St. Stephen, in the seventh chapter of the Acts.

Q. What did Moses himself say?

A. That the Lord should raise up a prophet like unto him.

Q. In what respect was Moses like unto Christ?

A. First in his birth; at the time of which there was a massacre of infants; and he was saved in Egypt, where Christ was saved from the power of Herod.

Q. What was the character of Moses?

A. He was a prophet *mighty in words and deeds;* which is the character of our Saviour.

Q. What great work was Moses sent upon?

A. To deliver the people out of Egypt, as Christ came to save us out of this sinful world.

Q. How was Moses received by the people?

A. When he came to deliver them, they quarrelled with him, and disputed his authority.

Q. Was that any argument against Moses?

A. None at all; for although they refused him, yet did God truly send him, to be their saviour from the miseries of Egypt.

Q. What argument doth St. Stephen draw from hence?

A. That if Christ was the true Saviour of the world, and *like unto Moses,* it was necessary he should be rejected, and thrust away by his own people.

Q. How were the Jews who had crucified Christ, affected by this argument?

A. It was so strong, they could not bear the force of it; but *gnashed* at St. Stephen with *their teeth,* to signify how ready they were to devour him.

Q. Does St. Stephen carry his argument beyond Joseph and Moses?

A. Yes; he tells them their fathers had persecuted all those prophets, those just men, who foreshewed the coming of the *just one,* Jesus Christ.

THE TEXT.

Acts vii. ver. 19—40.

XVI. THE CHAPTER OF THE BODY OF MAN.

As the body of man is made up of different members and limbs, all intended for their several uses, and some of them in higher, some in lower stations; so in like manner are different men formed together into one body, in what we call society; wherein men are as necessary to one another, as the different limbs are

necessary to the body. In a kingdom the king is the head, giving life, strength, and direction to the whole body; and a people without a king are like a body without a head. As the eyes guide the feet, so do the wise and learned direct the simple. The business of the hands is to work; and in a community many are born to labour, and without them a city cannot be inhabited. As the feet go about for the service of the body, so must the lower sorts be messengers and attendants to their superiors. As the stomach receives that food and nourishment which gives strength to the limbs; so must every government receive tribute, that it may be able to maintain its power, for the execution of the laws, and the defence of the people.

In an army, which is another sort of body, there is one who is in the place of the king, and acts as a head to all the rest. He uses his spies, as the head uses the sight, that he may see what is necessary to be done. Some are officers and counsellors; others are officers, and not counsellors; and the common soldiers are to come and go, and do as they are commanded. A body of soldiers is called a *regiment*, from their being disposed in exact order, and under strict authority; for where there is no order, there is no strength; and where there is no obedience, nothing can be done. When the body is upright, it can exercise its power; but when turned upside down, it becomes weak and useless.

God is the God of order; and he hath appointed it to prevail every where for our good. Even in the world at large, the lights of heaven bear rule, and the earth and the sea know their place. But most of all is order to be observed in the Christian society; and every thing else is but a lesson to teach us that which is the best of all. *As the body*, saith the Apostle, *is*

one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ; that is, *the body of Christ,* which is the *Church.* For here the head is Christ himself; and under him, all the members, fitly placed, minister to each other, and to the good of the whole body. Some are Apostles, some teachers; some are as eyes to see for the rest; some as tongues, to speak and interpret; some as hands administering to the necessities of others: some as ears to receive what others teach; some to govern and order things; others to be under direction in a lower station, as the feet in a natural body. But all these are to consider, that, whatever their place may be, they have but one common interest, and are all animated by the same life. In the natural body there is no schism, no division, no disputing of one part against another; all the members suffer together, and all rejoice together: and so it ought to be in the body spiritual; for to divide the body is to divide Christ, if that could be done. It is a good thing to have an higher place, and to be of more eminent use in this body; and it is an honour much to be coveted: but the most excellent way of all, and that in which every man hath his share, is to preserve the unity of the body, by a principle of love and charity, which is the first of all virtues, and shall outlast all other gifts; for it shall survive after death, and constitute the chief happiness of heaven. The Apostle St. Paul is no where so urgent, as when he presses upon all Christians this great and necessary duty of charity.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What doth a *body* mean, when it is applied to a society?

A. It means a company of people, disposed in an orderly form, as the members are in the body of man.

Q. What doth this comparison chiefly teach us?

A. The use and duty of *subordination.*

Q. What is subordination?

A. The placing of some persons in offices and stations *under* others.

Q. Who is the head of such a body?

A. The king, ruler, or leader.

Q. Who are the *eyes?*

A. The wiser sort, whose duty it is to see and learn for the benefit of the rest.

Q. What was a prophet formerly called?

A. A *seer.*

Q. Who are the feet?

A. The lower sort of people, who attend upon the higher.

Q. Are some better than others on this account?

A. All are necessary to one another, and are therefore all to be honoured in their stations.

Q. Who is the author of order?

A. God.

Q. How do you see this?

A. I see the senses and powers which are intended to direct us, placed in the *head,* the *uppermost* part in the body.

Q. Where do you see it again?

A. In the order of the world, where the sun and

moon, that rule over the day and night, are placed above, and the earth and seas below.

Q. How doth St. Paul apply this similitude of a body?

A. To the Church of Christ, and the order of the persons who belong to it.

Q. Who is the head of the Church?

A. Jesus Christ; who is also the head of all the kingdoms of the world, *King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

Q. What is the life of that body which we call the Church?

A. The Spirit of God; and as one life animates all the limbs of the same body, so *one spirit* quickeneth all the members of the Church.

Q. What is the great duty we are to learn from this consideration?

A. That of Christian unity; for as the members of the same body all feel for one another, and all suffer or rejoice together, so should all Christians.

Q. What sin doth this teach us to understand and avoid?

A. That of Church-division, which we call *schism.*

Q. Why is this such a great sin?

A. Because it is contrary to the greatest of all virtues, which is charity: also, it is *unnatural* that any body should be at enmity with itself; and it is destructive, because such a body, either in whole or in part, must perish. No limb can live, when it is severed from the life of the body.

Q. What is the true meaning of that virtue which the Apostle calls *charity?*

A. It is the *friendship of Christians;* the love and unity of the body of Christ, under him who is the head

of it; which shall endure in heaven, when all other things shall fail and vanish away.

THE TEXTS.

Isa. i. 5. &c. *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the soul of our foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.*

Col. i. 18. *He is the head of the body, the Church.*

Rom. xii. 4. *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

Eph. iv. 15. *Speaking the truth in love (we) may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*

16. *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

4. *There is one body, and one Spirit.*

Read also 1 Cor. chap. xii. and xiii.

XVII. THE CHAPTER OF THE PRIEST AND THE SACRIFICE.

A PRIEST is a person chosen of God to intercede for the people; that is, to stand between heaven and earth, to act for both. He presents offerings and

prayers on the part of the people; and pronounces pardons and blessings on the part of God. All ages and all nations (except some wild and fanciful people of these latter days) Patriarchs, Jews, Christians, and the very Heathens, have admitted the authority, and observed the ordinances of priesthood; all of them declaring with one voice, that without intercession, and the shedding of innocent blood, there can be no remission to sinful man.

Being born a child of wrath, under sentence for sin, and subject to death, I am but dust and ashes: dust by death, and ashes by condemnation. My body must return to the dust from which it was taken; and if God were to visit my sin, as he might in justice do, with the fire of his wrath, nothing would remain of me but an heap of ashes, a sad monument of unexpiated sin. In this state, I can do nothing to save myself; I can only suffer what God pronounced on Adam, "*In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die.*"

To shew how I am saved from this death, an innocent creature, a lamb, an ox, or a sheep, was brought to the altar to be consumed instead of the offerer. Sin in me should suffer what the burning bleeding victim suffered, unless God had appointed a priest to intercede for me, and a sacrifice to die for me.

But then, I am to understand, that the blood of bulls and of goats, or of the passover itself, *cannot take away sin.* These were only the prophetical signs of the law, to teach men that Jesus Christ should act once for all as priest and sacrifice, to take away the sin of the world. Unless his death had been foreordained of God for the salvation of man, there never would have been any such thing as a priest or a sacrifice heard of in the world; they would have had no meaning, and could have been of no effect.

As the death of Christ was foreshewn to the faithful by bloody sacrifices before he came; so now, after he is come, his death is commemorated, and its benefits communicated, by the signs of bread and wine, the new Passover of the Gospel, in which we are said to *eat his flesh* and *drink his blood;* and except we partake of this sacrifice, we have no more life in our souls, than our bodies would have without meat and drink. So long as there are offerings, there must be priests to offer. Jesus Christ does not act in person under the Gospel, any more than under the law; he is present with us only by those persons who are ordained to act for him; and every true priest must be of his making; for *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God.* No man can act for a king, but he who hath the king's authority; so can no man act for God, but he whom God hath appointed. Who are they that make light of priests, and neglect the Christian sacrifice? None but they who *have* no priests, or who think they *want* none, or that they can make priests of themselves. Jesus Christ is indeed the only true priest; and every Christian praying to God through his merits, is in private a priest to himself; but priests must be appointed of God, to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ, and communicate the benefits of it from the altar to the congregation, and to pronounce pardon and absolution (that is, forgiveness of sin) from him to the penitent sinner.

This is God's way of forgiving sin; for the *teaching* of our minds, and the *trial* of our faith and obedience. Proud people, who understand not the ways of God, think no man great enough to rule them, no man good enough to pray for them; not considering, that no man is any thing of himself; the sufficiency of the ministry being only from God. Therefore God

is not jealous of the authority of his ministers, but of his own authority in them. He that despiseth you, says our Lord to his ministers, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me; so said Moses and Aaron against *Corah, Dathan,* and *Abiram,* who presumptuously made priests of themselves; *What are we? Your rebellion is not against us, but against the Lord.* He who hath no priest, hath no sacrifice; he who hath no sacrifice, must be a sacrifice for himself; therefore if I forfeit the benefit of Christ's death, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin,* but a *certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation,* such as fell upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah,* and such as there would be upon me, and upon all mankind, if there were neither priest nor sacrifice appointed for us. Every man must then be his own sacrifice, and bear the wrath of God in his own person.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is a Priest?

A. An intercessor appointed of God to present offerings and pronounce blessings.

Q. Who were they that observed the rites of priesthood and sacrifices?

A. All ages and nations, till human philosophy of late time invented a religion without a Saviour.

Q. Why is man called dust and ashes?

A. Because he is subject to death, and to the fire of God's justice against sin.

Q. How is this to be turned away from us?

A. By Jesus Christ placing himself in our stead as a sacrifice.

Q. What did the sacrifices mean under the law of Moses?

A. They shewed his death.

Q. Are priests necessary under the Gospel?

A. They are now of another order; but they are still priests as before.

Q. Why so?

A. Because Melchisedec is called the *priest of the most high God,* though he offered only *bread* and *wine.* (Gen. xiv. 18.)

Q. How came there to be priests on earth?

A. There never would have been any but for Jesus Christ; for all others act in and through him, who is the only true priest from the beginning to the end of the world.

Q. Who are they that despise priests?

A. They who have none, or think they want none.

Q. Who gives authority to priests?

A. God; who will vindicate in them his own authority, which must be supported, not for our sakes, but for his own glory.

Q. Suppose we forfeit the benefits of the priesthood, and sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

A. There remaineth for us then nothing but that *judgment* and *fiery indignation,* which would have been upon all mankind if there had been no Saviour.

Q. Where are you to learn the nature of the priesthood of Jesus Christ and his ministers?

A. It is all explained at large in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

THE TEXTS.

Heb. v. 1. *Every high priest taken from among men is ordained, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.*

Gen. xxii. 13. *And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering, instead of his son.*

Gen. xviii. 27. *I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.*

Rom. viii. 3. (margin) *By a sacrifice for sin he condemned sin in the flesh.*

Lev. ix. 24. *And then came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering.*

1 Cor. v. 7. *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast.*

Heb. xiii. 10. *We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle.*

John xx. 21. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you—whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.*

1 Cor. x. 16. *The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?*

XVIII. THE CHAPTER OF GLORY.

I AM to praise God, for having given me the *hope of glory*. What is glory? It signifies the bright shining of the light; and the word is applied to the lights of heaven. *There is one glory of the sun, and*

another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. The glory of the light dwelleth in the sun, and from him it is spread over all the creation below, where no object has any light of its own. So the glory of the invisible heavens is with God; and from him it is communicated to angels and saints, who have no glory but what they receive from Him. All objects, on which the sun shines, are in a glorified state, compared with those on which it doth not shine; so it is impossible to be in the presence of God without being shone upon and glorified; therefore, when God himself shall be made manifest, and *his light* shall shine, *we shall all be changed;* and our change shall happen *in a moment,* in the *twinkling of an eye;* for so doth light break out suddenly, and shine upon all things.

While we live upon this earth, our light is interrupted with darkness, and our summer is followed by a winter. One half of the earth's globe is in darkness, and they that inhabit it are turned round every day into its shadow; but if we are lifted up into the heavens, farther than the extent of the earth's shade, our day would be uninterrupted, and our season would be the same. Such is the state of those who are in the presence of God; for with him there is none of this *variableness nor shadow of turning.*

All that is heavenly, or comes from heaven, is bright and glorious; all that is earthly partakes of darkness. When Jesus was transfigured, his raiment became white as the light itself. When the angel of the Lord descended to deliver Peter, a light shined in the prison at midnight. When Moses conversed with God upon the Mount, his face retained the light which had shone upon it, so that the people could not stedfastly look upon him. When Jesus appeared to

Paul in the way to Damascus, such was the glory of the light which attended him, that all the company fell to the earth; and Paul himself was struck blind.

How shall I who am now in darkness, be made a partaker of the glory which is set before me? How, but by considering first with myself, what a dreadful thing it would be, if I should lose the kingdom of glory, and fall into the kingdom of darkness! It is possible to love darkness rather than light; God forbid I should be of that mind! But I shall be so if my works are evil; therefore let me now put away the works of darkness. Then let me take the word of God, as a light unto my path. As Christ endured the Cross, and despised the shame of it, for the joy that was set before him; so let me bear the sufferings of the present time, whatever they may be, knowing that they are *not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* Let me be constant in using the means of grace, that I may be prepared by them for the enjoyment of glory. So shall God, who breathed into me the breath of life from his Spirit, enlighten me at last with his presence, when my body shall be *raised up in glory;* and *mortality* shall be *swallowed up of life;* as the darkness of the earth is drowned and overcome by the light of heaven pouring in upon it at the rising of the sun.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What is glory?
A. It signifies the bright shining of the light.
Q. What is the glory of the natural creation?
A. The sun.
Q. What is the glory of the kingdom of heaven?
A. God himself.

Q. What shall glorify the saints ?

A. The presence of God.

Q. How doth the Scripture describe him ?

A. As having *no variableness nor shadow of turning ;* like to what we are subject to who inhabit this earth.

Q. How did Christ appear, when he was transfigured ?

A. His raiment became white as snow, his face shone like the sun, and his whole person as bright as the light itself.

Q. Did any sign of glory attend the angels of heaven when they appeared ?

A. A light shone in the prison when Peter was delivered by an angel.

Q. What was the effect, when Moses conversed with God ?

A. A glory remained upon his face, too bright for the people to behold.

Q. How are you to obtain the glory which is promised ?

A. By putting away the works of darkness.

Q. Who are they that love darkness rather than light ?

A. They whose works are evil.

Q. How is the mind to be glorified now ?

A. By conversing with God as Moses did.

Q. How can that be done ?

A. By reading and studying his word.

Q. How are you to prepare yourself farther ?

A. By bearing, as Christ did, the sufferings of the present time.

Q. How farther ?

A. By using the means of grace ; for it is grace only that leads us to glory.

THE TEXTS.

Psalm xix. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God.*

Rom. xvi. 27. *To God only wise be glory.*

Luke ix. 29. *And his raiment was white and glistening.*—32. *And when they were awake, they saw his glory.*

2 Cor. iii. 7. *The children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance.*—18. *But we all, with open* (unveiled) *face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.*

Luke ix. 26. *He shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the Holy Angels.*

Col. i. 27. *Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

Rom. viii. 18. *The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

XIX. THE PREACHER'S PICTURE OF OLD AGE.

In the 12th Chapter of *Ecclesiastes,* the preacher admonishes me to dedicate my youthful days to the service of *my Creator,* considering the *evil days* which are coming upon us, when all the faculties of our minds and bodies shall fail us under the infirmities of age. For then, as the preacher beautifully represents it to us, as in a glass or mirror, *the sun and the moon and the stars are darkened;* the superior powers, which

rule in the body of man, as the heavenly luminaries do in the world; the understanding and reason, the imagination and the memory, are obscured, as when the clouds interpose between us and the lights of the firmament. In the earlier season of life, the clouds of affliction having poured down their *rain,* they pass away, and sunshine succeeds; but now the *clouds return after the rain;* old age itself is a continual sorrow, and there is no longer any hope of fair weather. *The keepers of the house,* the arms and hands which are made to guard and defend the body, begin to shake and *tremble;* and the *strong men,* the shoulders, where the strength of the body is placed, and which were once able to bear every weight, begin to stoop and *bow themselves;* and the *grinders,* the teeth, begin to fall away, and *cease* to do their work, *because they are few. Also those that look out of the windows are darkened;* the eyes, those windows of the body, through which we look at all things abroad as we look out from the windows of a house, become dim; and he that uses them is as one who looketh out of a window in the night. *Then the doors are shut in the streets;* difficulties and obstructions attend all the passages of the body, and digestion becomes weak when the *grinding is low.* The youthful and healthy sleep sound, and are apt to transgress by taking too much rest; but the aged sleep with difficulty, and *rise up at the voice of the birds;* they are ready to leave their disturbed rest at the crowing of the cock. *The daughters of music are brought low;* the voice falls and becomes hoarse; the hearing is dull: and the spirits, now less active than they used to be, are less affected by the powers of harmony; and so sit in heaviness, hanging down their heads, as virgins drooping under the sorrow of captivity. Old age, being in-

active and helpless, becomes *afraid of that which is high;* it is fearful of climbing, because it is in danger of falling; and being unfit to endure the hardness of fatigue, and the shocks of a rough journey, the *fears* which are *in the way* discourage it from setting out. Then the *almond tree flourishes;* the hair of the head becomes white, as the early almond blossoms in the hard weather of the winter, before the snows have left us; and even *the grasshopper becomes a burthen;* the legs, once light and nimble to leap, as the legs of that insect, and which used with ease to bear the weight of the whole body, are now become a burthen, and can scarcely carry themselves; and when the faculties thus fail, the *desire fails* along with them, for nothing is desirable, when nothing can be enjoyed.

Such are the *evil days,* which come upon us when our youth is past, and prepare the way for that last and greatest evil of our death, when *man goeth* to his *long home,* and the *mourners go about the streets,* lamenting his departure. Then the *silver cord,* the nerves whose coat is white and shining as a cord of silver, is loosed, and no longer do their office. The circulation of the blood stops at the heart, the fountain of life, as when a *pitcher,* which draws water, *is broken at the well,* or the watering *wheel,* circulating with its buckets, which it both fills and empties at the same time, is *broken at the cistern.* Thus do the vital motions all cease in death; and the *dust returns to the earth,* to become such *as it was,* before man was made out of it; and his immortal *spirit returns unto God,* the fountain of immortality, from whom it proceeded.

Let then the light of my understanding, while I have it, be employed in the search of truth, and let my memory be a treasury of all useful learning; let my

hands labour while their strength lasts, and my shoulders be ready and patient under every burthen: let my mind be ever looking out through the windows of my body, to see and learn, while the day-light is with me. Let the daughters of music be employed in the praises of God, before they are brought low: let my diet be that of sobriety and temperance, that the doors may not be shut in the streets before the time; and when my sleep shall be less, let my meditation be more on God, and my latter end, and the things of eternity. As the *outward man decayeth*, let the *inward man be renewed day by day;* that when my spirit shall depart, it may return with joy to God that gave it, and I may at last find an habitation, which shall be subject to no decay, when this *mortal shall put on immortality.* Amen.

THE QUESTIONS.

Q. What does the preacher mean by the *evil days?*

A. The time of old age.

Q. How does he describe the infirmities of old age?

A. Under terms which are like those of a proverb or riddle.

Q. What is meant by the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars?

A. The failing of the understanding, judgment, and memory.

Q. What are the keepers of the house?

A. The arms and hands, which guard and defend the body.

Q. What are the *strong men?*

A. The shoulders, in which our chief strength lies.

Q. Who are they that look out of the windows?

A. The eyes.

Q. Which are the grinders?

A. The teeth which grind our food.

Q. Who are the daughters of music?

A. The voice which sings, and the ears that hear, and the spirits which are moved with music.

Q. What agrees to the almond tree, which blossoms in winter?

A. The hairs of the head, which turn white in old age.

Q. What is meant by the grasshopper?

A. The legs, which are light and active in youth, but become a burthen to themselves in old age.

Q. What means the breaking of the pitcher at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern?

A. The stopping of the circulation at the heart, and the ceasing of the motion in the lungs.

Q. Where goes the body?

A. To the dust out of which it was taken.

Q. Where goes the spirit?

A. To God that gave it.

Q. What is the duty to be learned from all these considerations?

A. To remember my Creator in the days of my youth.

THE TEXT.

See Ecclesiastes, Chap. xii. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

END OF PART II.

A

KEY

TO THE

LANGUAGE OF PROPHESY,

WITH REFERENCES TO TEXTS

OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

A

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

BOOK OF NATURE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

If the Reader uses this little work, so as to implant the matter of it in his mind, he must not spare the labour of turning to ALL the texts, referred to as authorities, for the interpretation of the several words. This is the way to learn the Language of Prophesy; and when some skill is acquired, other texts may be found, to confirm these that are here set down. The marginal notes, in some good editions of the Bible, will give farther light, and ought to be consulted.

A

KEY

TO THE

LANGUAGE OF PROPHESY.

THE HEAVENS AND ELEMENTS.

HEAVENS or Firmament. *The Divine Power ruling over the World.* Dan. iv. 26. Psalm cl. 1.

The Sun. *The Lord God.* Psalm lxxxiv. 11. 1 John i. 5.

The Light of the World. *Christ.* John viii. 12.

The Sun of Righteousness. *Christ.* Mal. iv. 2.

Air, Wind, or Breath. *The Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life.* John xx. 22. John iii. 8. Acts ii. 2.

Burning Fire. *The Divine Wrath.* Deut. ii. 24. Ezek. xxii. 31. Heb. xii. 29.

Sun and Moon. *The Powers of Government in the World.* Psalm lxxxix. 36. Joel ii. 10. Acts ii. 20.

Moon. *The Church.* Cant. vi. 10. Col. ii. 16.

Stars. *The Rulers and Lights of the Church.* Rev. i. 20. *The glorified Saints.* 1 Cor. xv. 41.

Wandering Stars, or Comets. *Wicked Apostates that go from Light into outer Darkness.* Jude 13.

Scorching Heat. *Trouble and Persecution.* Matth. xiii. 6. 21.

The Day, in Opposition to the Night. *A State of Truth, and Hope, and Knowledge.* 1 Thess. v. 5. 8.
Darkness. *Sin and Ignorance.* Rom. xiii. 12.
Dew upon Herbs. *The Blessing of Heaven, and the Power of the Resurrection.* Hos. xiv. 5. Isaiah xxvi. 19.
Water. *Purifying Grace of the Divine Spirit.* 2 Kings v. 10. Psalm li. 2. John iii. 5.
Living Water. *Word of the Gospel.* John iv. 10.
The Sea. *The Gentile World.* Isa. lx. 5.
Waves of the Sea. *The rebellious Force and Turbulence of the People.* Psalm lxv. 7. Jude, 13.
Earth. *The Natural Man.* 1 Cor. xv. 47. Gen. xviii. 27.

THE THREE NATURAL KINGDOMS; OF PLANTS, ANIMALS, AND MINERALS.

1. PLANTS.

Trees. *Men fruitful, and unfruitful.* Psalm i. 3. Matt. iii. 10.
Vine. *The Church.* Psalm lxxx. 8. 14. *Christ, the Head and Root of the Church.* John xv. 1.
Growth of Plants. *Resurrection and Glorification.* Hos. xiv. 7. John xii. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 36, &c. Isa. lxvi. 14. *Growth in Grace.* Isa. lv. 10.
Planting. *Placing in the Church, to be nourished with Grace.* Psalm xcii. 13. Matth. xv. 13. 1 Cor. iii. 6. 8. Isa. xli. 19.

Cedars. *Great Men.* Zech. xi. 2.

Thorns and Briars. *The Wicked, Perverse, and Untractable.* Numb. xxxiii. 55. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6. Ezek. ii. 6. Luke vi. 44.

Fruit. *Good Works.* Matt. iii. 8. Jam. iii. 17.

Flower. *An Emblem of Mortal Man.* Job xiv. 2. Jam. i. 10, 11.

Seed. *Posterity.* Gen. xvii. 7, 8.

Wild Olive. *Man in a State of Nature.* Rom. xi. 17.

Cultivated Olive. *Church of God.* Rom. ii. 24.

Oil. *The Spirit of God giving Power to Kings and Priests, and Health to the Sick.* Acts x. 38. Psal. lxxxix. 20. Jam. v. 14.

Wine. *Blood.* Isa. lxiii. 1, &c. Rev. xxiv. 20. Luke xxii. 20. Gen. xlix. 11.

Grapes. *Fruits of Righteousness.* Isa. v. 2.

Leaves. *Words, the Service of the Lips, as distinguished from the Fruits of good Works.* Matt. xxi. 19. *See and consider,* Psalm i. 3.

Chaff. *Unprofitable worthless Men, to be driven away with the Wind, or burned in the Fire.* Psalm i. 4. Matt. iii. 12.

Wormwood. *A bitter evil-minded Person.* Deut. xxix. 18. Heb. xii. 15.

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2. ANIMALS.

Beast. *An evil brutish Man.* 1 Cor. xv. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 12.

A Great Beast. *An Heathen Kingdom, or Power of the Earth.* Dan. vii. 17.

Lion. *The Royal Character in the Messiah.* Rev. v. 5. Prov. xx. 2.

Lion. *A Persecutor, whether heathenish or diabolical.* 1 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8.

Ox, treading out Corn. *A Minister of the Word.* 1 Cor. ix. 9. 1 Tim. v. 18.

Dog. *For his Vigilance, means a Watchman, to give Notice of approaching Danger.* Isa. lvi. 10.

Dogs. *Unclean impudent Persons.* Deut. xxiii. 18. Rev. xxii. 15. Matt. vii. 6.

Wolf. *A Thief, or religious Impostor, a Devourer of the Church.* Luke x. 3. John x. 12.

Sheep under a Shepherd. *The People under a King.* Zech. xiii. 7. *The Congregation under Christ.* Psalm c. 3. Matt. xv. 24.

Serpent. *The Devil.* Rev. xii. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 3.

Vipers. *The Children of the Devil.* Matt. iii. 7. 12. 34.

Birds of the Air. *Evil Spirits.* Matt. xiii. 4, compare with 19. Rev. xviii. 2.

Fox. *A cunning deceitful Person.* Luke xiii. 32.

Animals in the Cherubim. *The Powers of God, and Attributes of Christ.* Ezek. i. 28. Heb. ix. 5.

The Lamb. *The Messiah, suffering for the Sins of the World.* Gen. xxii. 8. John i. 29. Rev. v. 12.

Swine. *Unclean ungodly People.* 2 Pet. ii. 22. Matt. vii. 6. Deut. xiv. 8. Matt. viii. 31.

3. MINERALS.

Stones. *People of an hard Heart; the unbelieving Gentiles.* Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Isa. v. 2. Matt. iii. 9. Compare Psalm lxxx. 8. with Isa. v. 2.

Clay in the Hands of the Potter. *Man in the hands of his Creator.* Rom. ix. 21. Isa. lxiv. 8.

Earthen Vessel. *Man's Body.* 2 Cor. iv. 7.

Dust and Ashes. *Mortal sinful Man, under Death and Condemnation, as a Burnt Sacrifice.* Gen. xviii. 27. Gen. iii. 19. Job xlii. 6. Mal. iv. 3.

Salt. *Such Doctrine as preserves the World from Corruption.* Matt. v. 13. Col. iv. 6. Tit. ii. 7.

Gold. *Good Men bearing Trouble as Gold bears the Fire.* Job xxiii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 7. Ezek. xiii. 9. *Wise and pure Doctrine.* Prov. xvi. 16. Rev. iii. 18.

Image of Gold, Silver, Brass, and Iron. *The four Monarchies or Kingdoms of the World.* Dan. ii. 31—45.

Riches and Talents. *Gifts and Graces from God.* Matt. xxv. 15. Luke xvi. 11.

Rock. *A Defence, a Place of Refuge.* Isa. xvii. 10.

Rock giving Water. *Christ giving Grace to a thirsty World.* 1 Cor. x. 4.

DIFFERENT STATES OF MEN.

King. *God the King of Kings, and Origin of all Authority and Power.* Matt. xxii. 2. Rev. xvii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 17. Psalm xxiv. 8.

Master or Teacher. *Christ.* Matt. xxiii. 8. John xiii. 13.

Servants. *Christians who give themselves up to the*

Service of God. Tit. i. 1. Rev. vii. 3. Gal. i. 10.

A Slave, one who has no Property in himself, but is bought by another. *Such are all Mankind, whom Christ hath redeemed.* 1 Cor. vi. 20. Deut. vii. 8. Isa. lxi. 1.

A Captive. *One under Sin and Satan.* 2 Tim. ii. 26. Rom. vii. 23.

A Father. *God the Father Almighty, of whom we are the Children by Creation and Redemption.* Mal. i. 6. ii. 10. Jer. xxxi. 9.

Brethren. *Christians united by their Profession.* Acts xxi. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

Two Brethren, the Elder, and the Younger. *The Jew and Gentile.* Gen. xxv. 23. Matt. xxi. 28. Luke xv. 11. 2 Kings iv. 1.

Family. *The Church of God.* Eph. iii. 15.

A Bridegroom. *Christ as the Spouse of the Church.* Mark ii. 19. Matth. ix. 25. Rev. xxi. 9.

A Virgin. *A Christian Church in its Purity.* 2 Cor. xi. 2.

A Harlot, Whore, or Adultress. *An Apostate Church, or City, with Heathen Corruptions.* Isa. i. 21. Jer. iii. 6. Ezek. xxiii. 7. Rev. xvii. 5.

A Shepherd. *Christ, the Leader and Keeper of his Flock, the Church.* Psalm xxiii. 1. Isa. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. John x. 14. 1 Pet. v. 4.

An Hireling. *A false Minister, who careth not for the Sheep.* John x. 12, 13.

Citizens. *Members of the heavenly City, the Jerusalem that is above.* Eph. ii. 19. Heb. xi. 10. xii. 22.

A Fisherman. *A Preacher, that winneth souls.* Luke v. 10.

Soldier. *A Christian, at War with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.* 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

A Captain. *The Leader of Salvation.* Heb. ii. 10. Josh. v. 15. 2 Chron. xiii. 12.

A Physician. *The Saviour curing the Sins and Sicknesses of the Mind.* Matt. ix. 12. Luke x. 34.

A Beggar. *Man, in respect of his Poverty and Weakness before God.* Rev. iii. 17.

HUSBANDRY.

The Field. *The World.* Matt. xiii. 38.

The Wheat. *The Children of the Kingdom.* Matt. xiii. 38.

The Tares. *The Children of the wicked One.* Matt. xii. 38.

The Harvest. *The End of the World.* Matt. xiii. 3. 39.

The Reapers. *The Angels.* Ibid.

A Sower. *A Preacher of the Word.* Matt. xiii. 3.

The Seed. *The Word of God.* Luke viii. 11.

The Ground. *The Heart of Man.* Luke viii. 15. Heb. vi. 7.

Thorns. *Cares, Riches, and Pleasures of Life.* Luke viii. 14. Heb. vi. 8.

Plowing and breaking up the Ground. *The preparation of the Heart by Repentance.* Hos. x. 12.

A Vineyard. *The Church of Israel.* Isa. v. 7.

The Mower. *Death, which cuts down the fairest Flowers of the Field.* Psalm xc. 6.

The Labourer. *The Minister, who serves under God in his Husbandry.* Matt. ix. 37, 38. 1 Cor. iii. 9. James v. 4.

Stubble. *The Wicked.* Isa. xl. 24.

The sifting of Wheat. *The Temptations and Trials of the Godly.* Luke xxii. 31.

THE BODY OF MAN, AND ITS CLOTHING.

A Body. *A Society: a Church, with its different Members.* 1 Cor. xii. 20—27.

The Head. *The superior Part: the governing Principle.* Ephes. v. 23. Isa. ix. 15. Deut. xxviii. 13. Isa. i. 5. Dan. ii. 38.

The Eye. *A Prophet, or Minister that giveth Knowledge to the People.* 1 Cor. xii. 16, 17. 1 Sam. ix. 9. Isa. xxx. 10.

Blindness. *Wanting Understanding in divine Wisdom.* Matt. xv. 14. 2 Pet. i. 9. Acts xiii. 11. Isa. xxix. 18.

Wounds, and Bruises, and putrifying Sores. *The miserable Effects of Sin in the Nature of Man.* Isa. i. 6. Jer. xvii. 14. Psalm cvii. 20. Isa. xxxiii. 5.

The Clothing of the Body. *Man being naked, the Gifts of Grace and Righteousness are a Clothing.* Matt. xxii. 11. Isaiah lxi. 10. Rev. vii.

14. Luke xv. 22. Rev. xv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. Gal. iii. 27.

Shoes. *The Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.* Eph. vi. 15. Luke xv. 22.

Armour. *A Covering of Grace against the Assaults of the Enemy.* Ephes. vi. 11.

An Helmet. *Salvation.* Eph. vi. 17. 1 Thess. v. 8.

The Shield. *Faith, to defend the Vital Parts, and resist the fiery Darts of Satan.* Eph. vi. 16.

Sword of the Spirit. *The Word of God.* Eph. vi. 17. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16.

A Rod or Wand. *Power and Rule.* Psalm cx. 2. Psalm ii. 9. Exod. iv. 17.

A Cloke. *Hypocrisy and Malice.* 1 Pet. ii. 16. 1 Thess. ii. 5.

A Crown. *A Garland of Herbs or Flowers, bestowed upon Champions and Conquerors, as the Reward of Victory.* 1 Cor. ix. 25. 2 Tim. ii. 5. 1 Pet. v. 4. Rev. ii. 10.

Life. *The Life of a regenerate Spirit: Immortality.* Isa. xxxviii. 16. Gen. ii. 9. Psalm xvi. 11. xxxvi. 9. Matt. xix. 17. John vi. 53.

Sleep. *Death, to be followed by a Resurrection.* John xi. 11. Dan. xii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

Death. *The State of a Soul insensible of Sin and Corruption, and destitute of the Spirit of Life.* 1 Tim. v. 6. Jude, 12. Rev. iii. 1. *A State of Mortification, Death to Sin, and Crucifixion with Christ.* Rom. vi. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Col. ii. 20. Gal. vi. 14.

Bread, Food, or Nourishment of any Sort. *The Word of God.* Deut. viii. 3. Matt. iv. 4. Heb. v. 12, 13, 14.

Hunger and Thirst. *The Appetites of the Spirit after Righteousness.* Luke i. 53. Matt. v. 6. John vii. 37. Psalm xlii. 2.

Itching Ears. *A Lust after the Preachers of false Doctrine.* 2 Tim. iv. 3.

Bodily Infirmities. *All the Distempers and Weaknesses of the Mind are expressed by them.* Isa. xxxv. 3—6. Matt. viii. 17. Isa. i. 5. *Miracles on the Body were therefore* SIGNS *of Salvation to the Soul.* John ix. 5, 6.

PLACES AND BUILDINGS.

PARADISE. *Was an emblematical Residence; the Name being applied to the invisible Residence of the Blessed.* Luke xxiii. 43. 1 Cor. xii. 4. Rev. ii. 7. *Also to the Church and Tabernacle.* Cant. iv. 12. Lam. ii. 6.

Jerusalem. *The earthly, a Sign, Earnest, and Pattern of the heavenly.* Gal. iv. 26. Rev. iii. 12. Heb. xi. 10. 12. 22.

Sodom. *The Name is applied to any Apostate City, or to the wicked World at large.* Isa. i. 10. Rev. xi. 8. Jude, 7.

Egypt and Babylon. *Mystical Names of Wickedness, whether of Jews, Heathens, or apostate Christians.* Rev. xvii. 5. 1 Pet. v. 13. Rev. xi. 8.

A Tabernacle. *The Body of Man, in which the Soul dwelleth.* 2 Cor. v. 1. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. *An House, a Temple, are used in the same Sense.* 2 Cor. v. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

An House. *The Church of God, in which his Family*

live, and he dwells with them. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 6.

The Ark of Noah. *The Church in which we are saved by the Water of Baptism.* 1 Pet. iii. 21.

The Wilderness. *This World, through which Christians pass, and undergo all the Trials of the Hebrews, in their Way to Canaan.* Isa. xxxv. 1. xli. 18. li. 3. 1 Cor. x. 5, 6.

RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE MOSAIC LAW.

High Priest. *Christ the only true Priest, in whose Person and Name every other Priest is appointed to act, under the Law and the Gospel.* Heb. iv. 14. v. 1.

Sacrifices. *Redemption by the Blood of Christ.* Heb. ix. 22. Eph. i. 7.

Incense. *An outward Sign of the Devotion of the Heart in Prayer, ascending up to God.* Psalm cxli. 2. Luke i. 10. Acts x. 4. Rev. v. 8.

Passover. *What the Paschal Lamb was at its first Institution, when the First-born of the Hebrews were all redeemed by it; such Christ is to us.* 1 Cor. v. 7.

Circumcision. *An Engagement, like that of Baptism, to renounce the Flesh and circumcise the Heart.* Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11. Rom. ii. 29.

Washing with Water. *Purification from Sin and Guilt.* Psalm lxxiii. 13. li. 2. 7. Isa. i. 16. Jer. iv. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Tabernacle. *A Representation of this World and the*

other ; and its Services a Rehearsal of what is done in both. Heb. ix. 1, &c.

The Vail of the Temple. *The Body of Christ, opening the Kingdom of Heaven by its Death, when the Vail was rent.* Matt. xxvii. 51. Heb. x. 20.

Manna. *The Bread that cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.* John vi. 31—33.

Priests Garments. *Emblematical of Purity and Sanctification.* Psalm cxxxii. 9.

LETTERS

FROM A

TUTOR TO HIS PUPILS.

TEACHING WE LEARN——
Young's Night Thoughts.

Quid enim munus reipublicæ adferre majus, meliusve possumus, quam si docemus atque erudimus juventutem? His præsertim moribus, atque temporibus, quibus ita prolapsa est, ut omnium opibus refrænanda ac coercenda sit.

Cic. de Divin. lib. iii.

TO THE

REV. SAMUEL GLASSE, D.D. F.R.S.

AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY,

WHO HAS DONE SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY, AS A LEARNED, PIOUS, AND FAITHFUL, INSTRUCTOR OF YOUTH,

THE FOLLOWING LETTERS

ARE INSCRIBED,

AS A SMALL TESTIMONY TO HIS PUBLIC MERIT,

AND A MONUMENT OF THAT FRIENDSHIP

WHICH HAS LONG SUBSISTED

BETWEEN HIMSELF

AND

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following Letters having endeavoured to make himself as useful as he could in the execution of an important trust, not only by reading books with his pupils, and teaching sciences, but by conversing freely with them, as occasion required, on literary and moral subjects; he took frequent opportunities of committing to paper, in the form of a letter, the substance of what had passed in these conversations. And as all young people of the same station have a common interest in most of the subjects thus treated of, he thought it might be of service to select a few of these Letters, and send them to the press; that when he has put them into the hands of his own pupils, for whose use they were intended, he may have the honour of addressing himself as a friendly monitor and guide to other young travellers, who are upon the same road to learning and virtue; and have many dangers to encounter, from the fervour of youth, their own inexperience, and the overbearing influence of ill principles and bad examples.

Though some copies of these Letters were gone out of his hands, and he was solicited by his friends to the publication, he lays no stress upon these considerations: his only motive is the desire of making an experiment for the benefit of youth; and if this little volume should be found capable of answering, in any degree so desirable an end, it will be accepted by such parents and teachers, as wish not only to cultivate the understanding of their scholars, which perhaps is their first object, but to secure them against the errors and miscarriages to which they are more particularly exposed in the present age; and to such he begs leave to recommend it for their patronage and protection. If his design should meet with the approbation of those who are the proper judges, he may be encouraged to send abroad hereafter another volume upon the same plan.

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LETTER I.

ON A TEACHABLE DISPOSITION.

Wolfe instructed his soldiers, that if the French should land in Kent, as they were then expected to do, actual service in that inclosed country would shew them the reason of several evolutions, which they had never been able to comprehend*. The soldier, therefore, submits to learn things of which he does not see the use. And is not every learner under the same obligation? If he desires to be taught, must not he bring with him that teachable disposition, which receives the rules and elements of learning implicitly, and trusts to the future for the knowledge of those reasons on which they are grounded? This is not a matter of choice: he can be taught on no other principle; for though the practice of a rule may seem very easy, the reason of that rule will generally lie too deep for a beginner; and long experience will be necessary before it can be understood: indeed there are many rules established, for which we have no reason but experience. If a learner will take his own judgment concerning the propriety of what is proposed to him,

* See General Wolfe's Instructions, p. 51, second edition.

before he is capable of judging rightly, he will cheat himself, and preclude his future improvement. At best, he will lose a great deal of time, and go the farthest way about; and, which is the greatest misfortune, he will contract bad habits in the beginning, and perhaps find himself unfit to be taught, when he would be glad to learn. I have seen some examples of young persons who have been disappointed by trusting at first to their own shallow conceptions, and supposing, what is very pleasant in idea, that Nature may be a master before it has been a scholar. If the consequences of this error are so bad in arts and sciences, and matters of accomplishment, they will be much worse in those things, which relate to the œconomy of human life.

It is indeed a very dangerous mistake to imagine, that the mind can be cultivated, and the manners formed, on any principle, but that of dependence: and therefore we cannot sufficiently lament that this wholesome and necessary doctrine is growing every day more and more out of fashion. Nothing is now to be taken upon authority. A wild and absurd system is prevailing, which encourages the depravity of nature, by admitting, that nothing is to be complied with by young people, of which they do not see the propriety: though it is morally impossible they should see it in many cases, till they look back upon the past time with eyes that are opened by years and experience: and thus we are nursing up a spirit of petulance and mutiny, which can never fail to render the labour of cultivation very disagreeable to the teacher. Some parents, who, through a natural partiality, are willing to have it thought that their children are prodigies of forwardness and acuteness, consult their opinions, and argue with them, under a persuasion that their own reason

will direct them, before they know the difference between good and evil. To argue with a child, who is to do as he is bid, is to take him out of his sphere, and to put him upon a level with his father. In some cases, where there is an unaspiring quiet temper, this may possibly succeed: but with a mercurial disposition, the experiment is always dangerous: for what is the issue? He is reasoned with: he reasons again, and perhaps, though he has the wrong side of the question, he may possibly have the better of the argument in the hearing of others: while the father, who is in the right, and ought in duty to persist, is silenced; and gives up the point, partly from vanity, and partly from affection. What can follow, but that the authority of the father will fall by degrees into contempt? and what he loses in authority, the child will gain in conceit and impertinence, till he will do nothing without a reason, and seldom with; for he thinks his own reasons better. As he grows up, he carries his impertinence with him into company, whom he interrupts by giving his judgment on all occasions, and upon subjects, of which he has only so much knowledge as qualifies him to be troublesome. The case is very unhappy, if we consider it so far only as his conversation is concerned; because wiser people will find themselves disgusted with his company, and avoid it. But when this untutored confidence is extended to moral action, the consequences which were disagreeable enough before, now become dreadful: and I fear it has been but too justly remarked, that the loose system of education adopted by some mistaken parents, on the recommendation of some enthusiastic philosophers, has produced a new generation of libertines, some of whom are such monsters of ignorance, insolence, and boundless profligacy, as never existed before in a Christian

country. How far this observation may be applicable to the softer sex, it is not my business to inquire. Parents live to see the consequences of their mistake, when they can only lament the opportunity they have lost. Besides, the method is radically absurd and unnatural in itself: it is contrary to that rational order which does and must prevail in all other cases of the kind. The raw recruit learns his exercise on the authority of his officer, because he knows nothing as yet of the art of war; and he waits for the reasons of it till he comes into action. The patient commits himself to the physician; consenting to a regimen which is against his appetites, and taking medicines, of which he knows neither the names nor the qualities; and while nature is ready to rebel at the taste of them. The Lacedemonians carried this doctrine to such excess, that they obliged their Ephori to submit to the ridiculous ceremony of being shaved when they entered upon their office; for no other end, but that it might be signified by this act, that they knew how to practise submission to the laws of their country. In short, it is an established and universal law, that he who will gain any thing must give up something: he that will improve his understanding, his manners, or his health, must contradict his will. This may be hard: but it is much harder to offer up wisdom, happiness, and perhaps even life itself, as a sacrifice to folly. So that after all the high flights and fancies of philosophic fanaticism, you may rest satisfied, there is no rule of education that has common sense in it, but the old-fashioned and almost exploded doctrine of authority on one side, and dependence on the other. He that will have liberty without discretion will lose more than he gains. He will escape from the authority of others, to be devoted to his own ignorance, and enslaved by

his own passions, which are the worst tyrants upon earth.

A gentleman appointed to a government abroad, consulted an eminent person, who was at that time the oracle of the law, as to the rule of his future conduct in his office, and begged his instructions. "I take you," said he, "for a man of integrity, and therefore the advice I must give you in general is, to act in all cases according to the best of your judgment: however, I have this one rule to recommend; never give your reasons: you will gain no ground that way, and perhaps bring yourself into great difficulties by attempting it. Let your reasons be those of an honest man, and such as you can answer; but never expose them to your inferiors, who will be sure to have their reasons against your's; and while reason is litigated, authority is lost, and the public interest suffers." I mention the advice of this famous politician, to shew you, that the wisest of men, and the undoubted friends of political liberty, are obliged in practice to adopt the principle which I have been explaining to you: so that when children resign themselves to the direction of their parents and tutors, who are bound by affection and interest to promote their happiness, and will take pleasure in shewing them the reason of things at a proper season, they do but follow the example of all communities of men in the world, who are passive for their own good; who are under laws, which not one in five hundred of them understands, and submit to actions of which they are not able to see either the propriety or the equity: and if children are treated as men are, no indignity is offered, and they have nothing to complain of. Your own sense will assure you upon the whole, that society cannot subsist, nor any business go forward,

without subordination: and the experience of all ages will teach you, when you come to be better acquainted with it, that the dissolution of authority is the dissolution of society. In the mean time, consider the wisdom and happiness which is found among a swarm of bees; a pattern to all human societies. There is perfect allegiance, perfect subordination: no time is lost in disputing or questioning; but business goes forward with cheerfulness at every opportunity, and the great object is the common interest. All are armed for defence and ready for work; so that in every member of the community, the two characters of the soldier and the labourer are united. If you look to the fruit of this wise œconomy, you find a store of honey for them to feed upon, when the summer is past, and the days of labour are finished. Such, I hope, will be the fruit of your studies.

LETTER II.

ON GOOD MANNERS.

Propriety of behaviour in company is necessary to every gentleman: for without good manners he can neither be acceptable to his friends, nor agreeable in conversation to strangers.

The three sources of ill manners are pride, ill nature, and want of sense; so that every person who is already endowed with humility, good nature, and good sense, will learn good manners with little or no teaching.

A writer who had great knowledge of mankind, has defined good manners as *the art of making those peo-*

ple easy with whom we converse; and his definition cannot be mended. The ill qualities above mentioned, all tend naturally to make people uneasy. Pride assumes all the conversation to itself, and makes the company insignificant. Ill nature makes offensive reflections; and folly makes no distinction of persons and occasions. Good manners are therefore in part negative: let but a sensible person refrain from pride and ill-nature, and his conversation will give satisfaction.

So far as good manners are positive, and related to good breeding, there are many established forms, which are to be learned by experience and conversation in the world. But there is one plain rule, worth all the rest added together; that a person who pretends to the character and behaviour of a gentleman, should do every thing with *gentleness;* with an easy, quiet, friendly manner, which doubles the value of every word and action. A forward, noisy, importunate, overbearing way of talking, is the very quintessence of ill-breeding: and hasty contradiction, unseasonable interruption of persons in their discourse, especially of elders or superiors, loud laughter, winkings, grimaces, and affected contortions of the body, are not only of low extraction in themselves, but are the natural symptoms of self-sufficiency and impudence.

It is a sign of great ignorance to talk much to other people of things in which they have no interest; and to be speaking familiarly by name of distant persons, to those who have no knowledge of them. It shews that the ideas are comprehended within a very narrow sphere, and that the memory has but few objects.

If you speak of any thing remarkable in its way, many inconsiderate people have a practice of telling you something of the same kind, which they think much more remarkable. If any person in the company is

recommended for what they do, they will be instantly telling you of somebody else whom they know, who does it much better: and thus a modest person, who meant to entertain, is disappointed and confounded by another's rudeness. True gentility, when improved by good sense, avoids every appearance of self-importance; and polite humility takes every opportunity of giving importance to the company: of which it may be truly said, as it was of worldly wealth, *it is better to give than to receive*. In our commerce with mankind, we are always to consider that *their* affairs are of more concern to *them* than our's are; and we should treat them on this principle; unless we are occasionally questioned, and directed to ourselves by the turn of the conversation. Discretion will always fix on some subject in which the company have a common share. Talk not of music to a physician, nor of medicine to a fidler; unless the fidler should be sick, and the physician at a concert. He that speaks only of such subjects as are familiar to himself, treats his company as the stork did the fox, presenting an entertainment to him in a deep pitcher, out of which no creature could feed but a long-billed fowl.

The rules I have laid down are such as take place chiefly in our conversation with strangers. Among friends and acquaintance, where there is freedom and pleasantry, daily practice will be attended with less reserve. But here let me give you warning, that too great familiarity, especially if attended with roughness and importunity, is always dangerous to friendship; which must be treated with some degree of tenderness and delicacy, if you wish it to be lasting. You are to keep your friend by the same behaviour that first won his esteem. And observe this as a maxim verified by

daily experience, that men advance themselves more commonly by the lesser arts of discretion, than by the more valuable endowments of wit and science; which without discretion to recommend them, are often left to disappointment and beggary.

The Earl of Chesterfield has given many directions which have been much admired of late years: but his rules are calculated to form the petit-maitre, the debauchee, or the insidious politician, with whom it would be totally unprofitable and even dangerous to converse. My late friend, the learned Dr. Delany, at the end of his anonymous *Observations* on Lord Orrery's Remarks, published a short original discourse of Swift on *Good Manners;* which contains more to the purpose in one page of it, than you will find in the whole volume of the courtly Earl, so highly applauded by ignorant people for his knowledge of the world.

We are apt to look upon good manners as a lighter sort of qualification, lying without the system of morality and Christian duty; which a man may possess or not possess, and yet be a very good man, but there is no foundation for such an opinion: the Apostle St. Paul hath plainly comprehended it in his well-known description of *charity*, which signifies the *friendship of Christians*, and is extended to so many cases, that no man can practise that virtue and be guilty of ill-manners. Shew me the man, who in his conversation discovers no signs that he is *puffed up* with pride; who never behaves himself *unseemly* or with impropriety*; who neither *envies* nor censures; who is *kind* and *patient towards* his friends; who *seeketh not his own*, but considers others rather than himself, and gives them the preference; I say, that man is not only all that we

* Ασχημονως.

intend by a gentleman, but much more: he really is, what all artificial courtesy affects to be, a philanthropist, a friend to mankind; whose company will delight while it improves, and whose good will rarely be evil spoken of. Christianity therefore is the best foundation of what we call good manners; and of two persons who have equal knowledge of the world, he that is the best Christian will be the best gentleman.

LETTER III.

ON TEMPERANCE.

A HEALTHY body and a sedate mind are blessings, without which this life, considered in itself, is little better than a punishment: and you should reflect on this while you are young, before intemperance has brought you into bondage: for it will be too late to persuade, when the judgment is depraved and weakened by ill habits. The epicure, by attempting to make too much of this life, shortens its period, and lessens its value. Instead of being the life of a man, it is scarcely so much as the life of a beast; for most beasts know when to be satisfied.

I have been led into these reflections by seeing in the newspapers the death of Gulosus, a country gentleman in the west of England, a man of good parts, a friendly disposition, and agreeable conversation. He was naturally of a strong constitution, and might have lasted to a good old age; but he is gone before his time through an error in opinion, which has destroyed more

than the sword. The sports of the field, to which he was much addicted, procured him a great appetite; and by the favour of a neighbour, who had the merit of keeping a full table, he had daily opportunities of gratifying it at an easy rate. He asked a friend, how much port a man might drink without hurting himself? This question was put to a valetudinarian, who gave it as his private opinion, that a pint in a day was more than would do any man good. There, says he, you and I differ: for I am convinced that one bottle after dinner will never hurt any man that uses exercise. Under this persuasion, he persevered in his custom of eating and drinking as much as could; though the excess of one day obliged him to take a large dose of rhubarb the next: so that his life was a continual struggle between fulness and physic, till nature was wearied out, and he sunk all at once, at the age of forty, under the stroke of an apoplexy. When nature fails in a strong man, the change is often very sudden. I who am obliged to live by rule, and am hitherto alive beyond hope, have seen the end of many younger and stronger men, who have unhappily presumed upon their strength, and have persevered in a constant habit of eating and drinking without reserve, till their digestive powers have failed, and their whole constitution has been shattered; so that either death, or incurable infirmity, has been the consequence.

What can be the reason, why the French people are so much less troubled with distempers, and are so much more lively in their spirits than the English? A gentleman of learning, with whom I had the pleasure of conversing at Paris, made this observation on the subject: "You English people give no rest to your faculties: you take three meals every day, and live in constant fulness without any relief: thus nature is

overcharged, crudities are accumulated in the vessels of the body, and you fall early into apoplexies, palsies, insanity, or hopeless stupidity. Whereas, if we are guilty of any excess, our meagre days, which are two in a week, bring us into order again; and if these should be insufficient, the season of Lent comes in to our relief, which is pretty sure to answer the purpose."

It is much to be lamented, and we are suffering for it in mind and body, that in these latter days of the Reformation, we have been so dreadfully afraid of superstition, that we have at length discarded every wholesome and necessary regulation; and because we do not whip our skins like the monks of antiquity, we stuff them till they burst. The consumption of animal food in England is by far too great for the enjoyment of health, and the public good of the community. The price of provisions becomes much more unreasonable; our fishery is neglected; and no one benefit arises, but that of putting money into the pockets of physicians and lawyers; which they never fail to do, who with constant fulness are sick in their bodies and quarrelsome in their tempers. The calendar of the Church of England, which is moderate enough in its restrictions, would be of infinite service to us, if it were duly observed. I once met with a wise and good man, far advanced in years, and of an infirm constitution, who assured me he neither used nor wanted any other physician. If we were to adopt his rule, nature would have that seasonable relief which is necessary; our health and our spirits would be better; suicide, a growing and tremendous evil, would be less frequent; our fishery would have better encouragement, a matter of no small weight to a maritime people, whose navigation is their natural defence; provisions would

be cheaper; the nation in general would be wiser; and perhaps we should also have a better claim to the blessing of Heaven, if we shewed a more pious regard to the wholesome regulations of the Christian church; which are now so shockingly neglected, that our feasts and merry-meetings are on Wednesdays and Fridays (perhaps on Good-Friday itself), when our forefathers of the Reformation, who kept up to what they professed, were praying and fasting.

The time hath come upon many great nations, when ill principles and self-indulgence, and that infatuation which is the natural consequence of both, have brought them to ruin; and in all appearance that time is now coming upon us. I am persuaded we have sunk more hastily into universal corruption, from the sanctified fastings of our Puritans in the days of Cromwell; whose rapine and violence, when compared with their affected mortifications, brought a scandal upon all the forms and appearances of Religion. Yet such has been our destiny, that while we have dropped the most religious of their practices, we have taken up with the worst of their principles, and are now suffering under the natural effects of them.

LETTER IV.

ON DIVERSIONS.

It is laid down as a principle of action by most young people of fortune, that there is no enjoyment of life without diversion: and this is now carried to

such excess, that pleasure seems to be the great object which has taken place of every other. The mistake is very unhappy, as I intend to shew, by taking the other side of the question, and proving that there is no enjoyment of life without work.

The words commonly used to signify play, are these four; relaxation, diversion, amusement, and recreation. The idea of relaxation is taken from a bow, which must be unbent when it is not wanted, to keep up its spring. Diversion signifies a turning aside from the main purpose of a journey to see something that is curious and out of the way. Amusement means an occasional forsaking of the Muses, when a student lays aside his books. Recreation is the refreshing of the spirits when they are exhausted with labour, so that they may be ready in due time to resume it again. From these considerations it follows, that the idle man who has no work, can have no play; for how can he be relaxed who is never bent? how can he turn out of the road, who is never in it? how can he leave the Muses who is never with them? how can play refresh him, who is never exhausted with business?

When diversion becomes the business of life, its nature is changed. All rest presupposes labour; and the bed is refreshing to a weary man; but when a man is confined to his bed, he is miserable, and wishes himself out of it. He that has no variety can have no enjoyment; he is surfeited with pleasure, and in the better hours of reflection, would find a refuge in labour itself. And, indeed, I apprehend there is not a more miserable, as well as a more worthless being, than a young man of fortune who has nothing to do but to find some new way of doing nothing. A sentence is passed upon all poor men, that if they do not work, they shall not eat; and it takes effect, in part,

against the rich, who, if they are not useful in some respect to the public, are pretty sure to become burthensome to themselves. This blessing goes along with every useful employment, it keeps a man upon good terms with himself, and consequently in good spirits, and in a capacity of pleasing, and being pleased with every innocent gratification. As labour is necessary to procure an appetite to the body, there must also be some previous exercise of the mind to prepare it for enjoyment; indulgence on any other terms is false in itself, and ruinous in its consequences; mirth degenerates into senseless riot, and gratification soon terminates in corruption.

If we compare the different lots of mankind, we shall find that happiness is much more equally distributed than we are apt to think, when we judge by outward appearance. The industrious poor, have, in many respects, more enjoyment of life, than the idler sort of gentry, who, by their abuse of liberty and wealth, fall into temptations and snares; and in the immoderate pursuit of imaginary pleasures, find nothing in the end, but real bitterness. The remedy of all is in this short sentence, "to be useful, is to be happy." If Eugenio had followed the profession for which his father intended him, he might now have been alive and a happy member of society; but his father dying when he was young, he used his liberty (as he called it) and threw himself upon the world as a man of leisure with a small fortune. His idleness exposed him to bad company, who were idle like himself; they led him into extravagance; extravagance led him to gambling, as a last resort for the repairing of his fortune; but it had a contrary effect, and completed his ruin; and disappointments made him quarrelsome, and a quarrel brought on a duel,

in which he lost his life at five and twenty. In this short account of Eugenio you have the history of many young men of this age, who are bewitched with the ideas of liberty and pleasure; but with this difference, that some are destroyed by others, and some destroy themselves.

The progress is much the same with a nation as with an individual; when they rise from poverty, activity, and industry, to improvement, ease, and elegance, they sink into indolence and luxury, which bring on a fever and delirium, till having quarrelled among themselves, and turned their swords against one another, they fall by a sort of political suicide, or become a prey to some foreign enemy.

LETTER V.

ON NOVELS.

When you read for amusement, let your mind be turned as much as possible to the real transactions of human life, as they are represented and commented upon by wise and faithful historians; and beware of throwing away your time, as too many now do, by giving yourself up to trifling works of imagination, of which there is a deluge in the present age, to the subversion of common sense, and the general corruption of our principles and morals.

While I was in the shop of a sensible bookseller in the country, a young man presented himself, who came for some volumes of a novel. As soon as he turned his back, "Sir (said the bookseller), our trade

is now in a manner reduced to this one article of letting out novels; that young man has read half the novels in my collection; and when he has finished his studies, by reading the other half, the ignorance he brought into my shop would have done him more good than the knowledge he will carry out of it. Many other occurrences have led me to reflect on this fashion, which has increased so much of late years, as nearly to swallow up all other reading; like the lean kine of Pharaoh, which swallowed up all the fat ones, and did not look the better for it.

Consider therefore, before your judgment is corrupted, that most novels are exceedingly lean in their matter, to say the best of them. Many of them are the cold productions of people who write for the fashion (with as much indifference as milliners make caps) without any materials worth communicating. Others are the offspring of a rambling fancy, which puts together a string of incidents, not one degree above the tea-table, and of no more real concern than if they were to hold you by the ears as some tiresome people do, with an account of their dreams; indeed many of them are but the waking dreams of those who know neither the world nor themselves. Many of them also are mean imitations, which affect the style and manner of more successful compositions. Some of them are void of all regular design, and made up of heterogeneous parts, which have no dependence upon one another.

———latè qui splendeat unus et alter
Assuitur pannus———

And thus they become like the party-coloured jacket of a fool upon the stage of a mountebank, who sets the

rabble a-gape with the low and insipid wonders he has collected, to detain them in his company, and draw the money out of their pockets.

It were well if the reading of novels were nothing worse than the loss of time and money, though this is bad enough: but young people will not escape so; it has generally a bad effect upon the mind, and in some instances, a fatal effect upon the morals and fortune. In novels, plays, and romances, (for they all have the same general object, which is *amusement)* good and evil are disguised by false colourings and unjust representations. The end is, *to please;* and how is this end to be obtained? Nothing will please loose people but intrigues and loose adventures; nothing will please the unlettered profligate but blasphemous sneers upon religion and the holy Scriptures; nothing will please the vicious but the palliation of vice and the contempt of virtue; therefore novelists and comic writers who study popularity, either for praise or profit, mix up vice with amiable qualities, to cover and recommend it, while virtue is compounded with such ingredients as have a natural tendency to make it odious. These tricks are put upon the public every day, and they take those for their benefactors who thus impose upon them.

But novels vitiate the taste while they corrupt the manners; through a desire of captivating the imagination, they fly above nature and reality; their characters are all overcharged, and their incidents boil over with improbabilities and absurdities. The imagination thus fed with wind and flatulence, loses its relish for truth, and can bear nothing that is ordinary; so that the reading of novels is to the mind what dram-drinking is to the body; the palate is vitiated, the stomach is squeamish, the juices are corrupted, the digestion is

spoiled, and life can be kept up only by that which is supernatural and violent. The gamester who accustoms himself to violent agitations, can find no pleasure unless his passions are all kept upon the stretch, like the rigging of a ship in a storm; his amusement is in racks, tortures, and even madness itself; and such is the taste of those who habituate their imaginations to the flights and extravagances of modern romances.

It is a certain proof that a nation is become degenerate in sense, in learning, in œconomy, in morals and in religion, when they are running thus after shadows, and neglecting all that is useful and valuable in life. The polite author of the Travels of Cyrus, describing the state of the Medes when their empire was declining, gives a lively picture of that literary corruption, which is the never-failing attendant upon luxury and a dissolution of morals: "Solid knowledge was looked upon as contrary to delicacy of manners; agreeable trifling, fine-spun thoughts, and lively sallies of imagination, were the only kinds of wit admired there; no sort of writing pleased but amusing fictions, where a perpetual succession of events surprised with their variety, without improving the understanding, or ennobling the heart."

I have sometimes been struck with the reflection, that few writers, who forge a series of events, look upon their attempt in a serious light, and consider the hazard of the undertaking; how they are in continual danger of giving us false notions of the consequences of human actions, and of misrepresenting the ways of Divine Providence; for the ways of men, so far as they are passive under the consequences of their own actions, are the ways of God. When we confine ourselves to real life, and are content with describing facts, with the consequences that actually followed

them, we may be unable to trace the designs of Providence, but then we do not misrepresent them; and the time will come when God will be justified in all those complicated events, which we are unable now to reconcile with the known laws of justice and goodness. But when we dare to settle the fate of imaginary characters, we take the providence of God out of his hands, assuming an office for which no man is fit, and in which he cannot miscarry without some danger to himself and others. For example; a writer may even mean well, and yet through short-sightedness and mistake, may bring virtue into distress under such circumstances as Providence, perhaps, never did nor will, and thereby may bring discouragements upon virtue, and even throw it into despair; he may give to vice that success which it never had, nor will have, so long as God governs the world.

To counterbalance this danger, Lord Bacon observes that, "in works of imagination there is liberty of representing virtue and vice in their proper colours with their proper rewards; and to correct as it were the common course of things, and satisfy the principles of justice, by which the mind of a reader is influenced." In this respect, works of genius have an advantage above real history, and may be admitted, provided the writer himself is of sound judgment, and influenced by principles of truth and justice.

If, when you have weighed these things together, you should suspect that I have been too nice and severe, consider that it is better to err on the side of caution and prudence; and that I may say for myself what the apostle said upon a like occasion, *I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy.*

Upon the whole, life is a serious thing, and all events are at God's disposal: and as the good and

evil of this world, transient and momentary as it is, stands connected with the good and evil of the next, which is perpetual, it is dangerous to trifle with it, as they are tempted to do, who address themselves only to the passions of men, without having any principles of truth and justice to restrain them.

I do not say, that you should abstain from all fiction, as such; for there is much profitable fiction. I could name several things which you may read in this way with safety and improvement: Gil Blas is a romance of the first class, in excellent French, distinguished by many capital strokes of good sense and original wit; the narrative of Rolando, the captain of the robbers, when we consider the character and profession of the person who delivers it, is one of the highest-wrought satires upon the follies of parental indulgence in education that is any where to be met with. I mean therefore to give you warning, that as fiction is now managed in plays and novels, it is proper to be upon your guard against it. And let me caution you against all productions of wit as make too free with religion, even with the errors of it; the mind by sporting with great subjects, will be accustomed to make dishonourable associations, and to lose much of that seriousness and veneration which is due to things of eternal moment. I question whether any man can read *Swift's Tale of a Tub,* or *Don Quevedo's Visions,* without finding himself the worse for it. In regard to all such indiscreet applications of wit, every young student may guard his mind and rectify his judgment, by reading Mr. *Collier's View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage:* a book which brought Dryden himself to repentance, and does indeed beggar every work upon the same argument; it is the triumph of

wit over scurrility; of piety over prophaneness; of learning over ignorance; and of Christianity over atheism.

There is a practice common with our fabulists, moralists, and romance writers, which is contrary to fact and nature, and therefore is absurd in itself, while it is disrespectful and injurious to true religion, though it wonderfully captivates the fancy of some people, who admire what is exotic, without considering whether it is reasonable. Our writers have a favourite practice of recommending wisdom and morality, and many admirable virtues, to Christian readers, in a *Turkish dress;* but is it not dishonest to give to the Koran the honour of those sentiments, and that illumination, which the author himself derived from a higher source? It ought to raise our indignation to see the imagery, eloquence, and purity of the Scripture, giving dignity to the antichristian spirit of Mahometan infidels. This is an offence of the same kind with what some learned critics have supposed to have been prohibited under the terms of the third commandment, "thou shalt not apply the name of God to a vanity, that is, to a heathen idol." For it seems not much less injurious, to take the pure and exalted doctrines of the Christian philosophy, and put them into the mouths of narrow-minded, barbarous, bigoted, malicious, illiterate Mussulmen, by supposing them to talk and moralize in the superior strain of a well-informed Christian; and to invigorate their speech with the powers of learning, like classical scholars who have studied oratory and elegance all their lives; though the Turk is a professed enemy to literature. This plan exposes us to another inconvenience; that if we speak in character, we must speak with veneration of the religion of Mahomet,

and call it *our most holy faith;* and the impostor who invented it must be *our holy prophet;* which though it is but fiction, yet such is the weakness of the human mind, and the force of custom, that we may tell lies, or hear them told, till we believe them; and speak respectfully of Mahomet, till we think but meanly of the Gospel. The *Adventurer* has great merit as a work of moral instruction and entertainment, and may be read with great advantage by young persons who would be aware of the ways of the world, and the snares that are laid to ruin innocence: in many respects the Adventurer is superior to the Spectator, and the author seems to have written with an excellent intention: but he has too frequently indulged that idle humour of laying his scenes upon Turkish ground, and conveying his precepts in Turkish attire.

The lives of men famous in their generation, as saints, martyrs, scholars, philosophers, soldiers; and of those who were singularly infamous, as impostors, thieves, murderers, tyrants, usurpers, &c. if faithfully represented, will instruct while they entertain, and exhibit good and evil in their true colours, to much better effect than the thin-spun long-winded letters of Richardson, the incoherent ramblings of Stern, or the low scenes of Smollet, &c. which leave behind them but little worth retaining.

LETTER VI.

ON THE USE OF MATHEMATICAL LEARNING.

A YOUNG member of the university of Oxford being directed by his tutor to the study of Euclid's Elements with the rest of his class, remonstrated against it to his companions as a useless undertaking: "What," said he, "does the man think my father intends me for a carpenter?" Many other scholars of more wit than experience are under the same mistake: they think the mathematical sciences are of no benefit, but to those who are to make either a practical or a professional use of them. It must be owned that their application to the business of life is chiefly in mechanics, astronomy, navigation, perspective, the military arts of fortifying and attacking of places, surveying of land, and the like. And where would be the harm, if a gentleman of fortune who has leisure to know every thing, should know some of these things? But the use of mathematical learning is by no means confined to practical arts and necessary computations; it is eminently serviceable to improve and strengthen the intellectual faculties, and render them more fit for every kind of speculation. Geometry is a sort of logic, wherein quantities are the objects of argumentation: and the method of arguing is so strict, that the order of a demonstration cannot be followed without that unremitting attention, which when it once becomes habitual to the mind, will be transferred to all other subjects. The memory will be better able on every occasion to assist the judgment in comparing what

went before with what comes after, and thence deducing a conclusion with precision. Logic teaches the art of deducing some third proposition from the comparison of two others in a syllogism: but a geometrical demonstration being frequently a series of such syllogisms, habituates the understanding to a more orderly arrangement of complicated ideas; for if the order is broken the proof is deficient. Method is of the first importance in all subjects, to give a discourse the two excellencies of force and perspicuity; and no practice is so proper to communicate this art of methodizing, as the forms of reasoning in geometry. We have a remarkable instance of the efficacy of this practice in the theological writings of Dr. Barrow, to whose skill in geometry it may be imputed in great measure, that he has divided and disposed his subjects with so much art and judgment, as to exhaust their matter, and render them intelligible in every part.

But even to omit this analogical use of geometry, the science is necessary in itself to give an understanding of many things, which ought to be known by men of a liberal education. Geography can be understood but very imperfectly without it: and the arts of projection, which teach us how to represent the face of the world in perspective, are as entertaining as they are useful. Every curious mind must be delighted with the operations of trigonometry; which enables us to measure with certainty such quantities and distances as are inaccessible: which to an ignorant person seems impossible, as if there were some magic in the work: but it is the general object of all mathematical reasoning, from known quantities to find others that are unknown, by means of certain relations subsisting between them.

There is scarcely any thing in nature more wonderful to a contemplative person, and more worthy to be studied, than the effect of certain proportions in the theory of music, which can never be examined and understood without some knowledge of the doctrine concerning the composition and resolution of ratios, a curious and useful branch of the mathematics. Pythagoras was so captivated with the mathematical sections of a musical string, and their practical application to some other arts, that he is reported to have exhorted his disciples, as he lay upon his death-bed, to study the monochord. And all this, as a matter of contemplation, for the improvement and enlargement of the mind, is worth the attention of a scholar, though he never intends to strike a note of music all the days of his life. How ignorant and even barbarous, would it be in a gentleman of education to remonstrate, that all this is nothing to him, because his father did not intend him for a fiddler?

In philosophy, especially under the present state of it, the use of mathematical learning is unquestionable. What gentleman of taste would not envy Sir George Shuckburgh for his late learned labours upon the Alps, where he had the opportunity of trying so many curious experiments, by an application of the present theory of that useful instrument the barometer, as improved by Mr. De Luc? But no gentleman can be qualified to amuse himself and serve the public in that way, without some considerable skill in calculation, the experiments being very intricate, and abounding with niceties which must be accurately understood and attended to.

A course of the most ingeniously contrived experiments on the velocity of projectiles, and the resistance of the air to bodies moving swiftly in it, were

invented by the late Mr. Robins the engineer, which for their elegance are by no means beneath the admiration of a scholar; who will never repent of the labour necessary for understanding them. They have been farther carried on very lately from small arms to ordnance by Dr. Hutton, a member of the Royal Society. Whatever the value of these experiments may be in themselves (and they are chiefly valuable to military artists), they have had at least one good effect, in which all men of literature have an interest; they have given occasion to a discourse from the late worthy president Sir John Pringle, which for its learning, curiosity, elegance of style, and propriety of oratory, must be admired by all judges as a pattern in that kind of writing.

Now I have carried you thus far into the uses of mathematical learning, let me warn you against the danger we are under from the abuses of it. Mankind are very ingenious in using things; and they are almost as ingenious in abusing them. That great and good man bishop Berkely brought a heavy charge against the mathematicians of his age; first, because they deviated wantonly, and with some perplexity and apparent contradiction, into a boundless field of useless subtilties. And secondly, because many of them were found to be ill affected to the greatest subjects of religion, which are infinitely more important in human life. It has been said that he carried the matter too far, and laid himself open to the criticisms of his adversaries: but he had too much learning and too much acuteness to make himself ridiculous in the management of any argument. There was some foundation of truth in what he advanced: for if the mind is not upon its guard, a mathematician is disposed to look for that sort of sensible demonstration in other subjects, which

is to be found only when we reason about quantities; and therefore he rejects much truth with a high hand, as if it were deficient in point of evidence: which is unreasonable and absurd. I am as perfectly convinced, that there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, and that he was murdered in the Capitol at Rome, as I am that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones; but I am not convinced upon the same kind of evidence: I cannot prove it by lines and angles. What then? I can no more doubt of the one than of the other: but I believe the one on visible descriptive evidence, depending upon certain axioms, or undeniable truths relating to quantities: and I believe the other on undeniable testimony, and the coins subsisting every where at this day, which bear his image and superscription, as also by his writings, which no man living was able to forge. I must therefore believe that there really was such a person, or I could soon shew you, that I must believe something more incredible; and that would be just as irrational as to deny a geometrical proposition with its own proper evidence.

The ingenious Mr. Robins above mentioned, who as a mathematician, a dextrous experimentalist, and a writer of a clear and classical style, was equal to most men living, was so unaccountably wild in his reasonings on some other subjects, that I have been told, he held the doctrine of future punishment to be a fable, because he could not see a *soul burned at Charing-cross:* as if the Scripture could not be true, because it is not a book of geometry; or there could be no future state, because we cannot prove it by an air pump. De Moivre, another eminent mathematician, who left France as a protestant refugee, is said to have derided himself afterwards for leaving his country to preserve his religion, which he lost past recovery when he had

been some time in England. I had occasion once to enquire after a great proficient in mathematical learning, whose works I had seen while I had no knowledge of his person. My bookseller at London, of whom I enquired, gave me a particular account of him; adding to the rest, that he was a *true mathematician*, for he was a *great reprobate, and every word he spoke was attended with an oath.* I mention this, to shew, that a notion had gone abroad, whether justly or not, that the generality of mathematicians are disposed, as such, to irreligion and profaneness. Two reasons may be given for this, supposing it to be true. The mathematics are open to students who have not had the advantages of a liberal education, and want the assistance of collateral learning to open their minds, and keep them within the bounds of truth and modesty. And as the fashion of the last and present age, with the fame so justly attributed to our great Newton, have placed the mathematical sciences so much higher than they used to be in the scale of literature, students who excel in them are under a temptation, incident to us all, to over-rate themselves and their knowledge. Thus they fall into vanity, pedantry, narrow-mindedness, and scepticism; neglecting and even despising all other learning, which is equally, and, in some respects, more valuable, for improving the heart and rectifying the judgment: ignorant of things, with which they are most intimately concerned; and placing all their pride in a sort of learning, to the exercise of which perhaps they will never be called, when they come forth into the business of life.

One thing I would whisper in the ear of scepticism before I quit the present subject, which is this; that the more a man knows, the farther he sees into truth: as he sees farther into truth, the objects of his belief

will be continually increasing: and therefore *Doubting*, as such, is not a sign of wisdom: as he advances in knowledge, he will find by experience that he doubted from ignorance.

LETTER VII.

ON READING AND PRONUNCIATION.

You are sensible we have taken some pains, and with good reason, in the practice of reading with propriety. It is a matter of the last importance in education, though too generally neglected: in public schools it is seldom thought of. Several years are spent in charging the memory with words, while few days are employed in forming the voice and judgment to utter them in a powerful and agreeable manner.

A scholar may be such in theory when his head is stored with languages, and he can interpret the writings of the Greeks and Romans; but he is no scholar in practice till he can express his own sentiments in a good style, and speak them in a proper manner. A mathematician understands the rationale of musical sounds; but the musician, who charms the ear, and touches the passions, is he who can combine sounds agreeably, according to the rules of art in composition, and perform them well upon an instrument. The dead philosophy of music in the head of a mathematician is like the learning of a Greek and Latin scholar, who can neither write nor read; and there are many such to be found.

There are two great faults in reading which people fall into naturally; and there is another fault which is the work of art, as bad, in my opinion, as either of the former: it is common with those who are untaught, or ill taught, to have a bad ear, to read in a lifeless insipid tone, without any of those artificial turnings of the voice which give force and grace to what is delivered. When a boy takes a book into his hand he quits his natural speech, and either falls into a whining canting tone, or assumes a stiff and formal manner, which has nether life nor meaning. Observe the same boy when he is at play with his companions, disputing, reasoning, accusing, or applauding, and you will hear him utter all his words with the flexures which are proper to the occasion, as nature and passion, and the matter dictates. Why does he not read as forcibly as he speaks? This he would soon do, if he were to consider, that reading is but another sort of talking. He that reads, talks out of a book; and he that talks, reads without book; this is all the difference: therefore let a boy consider with himself, how he would talk what he is reading, and then he will drop the formal tone he had assumed, and pronounce easily and naturally.

The sense of a passage depends so much on the emphasis with which it is uttered, that if you read without emphasis, the matter is dead and unaffecting: if you lay it on the wrong word, you alter the sense. Trite examples have been given of sentences which have as many meanings as words when the emphasis is differently placed. Thus, if the question were asked, *Do you ride to London to-day?* Place the accent on the first word, the sense is, *Do you; or do you not?* If you place it on the second, it means, *Do you go yourself; or does somebody else go for you?* Lay it on the third, it means, *Do you go on horseback, or on*

foot, &c.? On the fourth, it asks, whether you go *so far as London, or only part of the way?* On the fifth, it is, do you ride *to London, or to some other place?* If you lay it on the two last, it asks, whether you go there *to-day, or at some other time?*

This example is sufficient to shew, that you must understand the meaning of a sentence before you can pronounce it right; and that if you pronounce it wrong the meaning cannot be understood by another person. To hear any one reading in a single unvaried note or monotone, without expressing the sense, is like looking upon a right line which has no variety of flexure to entertain the eye; and if he reads with a false emphasis, he makes the sense absurd and ridiculous. Many instances have been reported to illustrate this absurdity. They tell us of a reader, who in delivering that passage of Scripture from the reading-desk, "He said unto them, saddle the ass, and they saddled him," unfortunately laid the accent on the last word; by which the sentence was made to signify, that the man was saddled instead of his beast.

The want of art and skill, especially in a matter where it is of real consequence, is unpardonable in a person of a liberal education: but it is equally offensive to be read with too much art. *Ne quid nimis*, is to be observed here as in other cases. Affectation is disgusting wherever it is to be found; it betrays a want of judgment in the speaker, and none ever admire it but the illiterate, who are not prepared to make proper distinctions. We are never more justly offended, than when an attempt is made to surprise us with unreasonable rant, with grimace and distortion, and such other emotions as are not justified by the matter delivered, and destroy the effect of it with those who have judgment to see through the artifice. When a speaker

seems to expect that I should be surprised, and I am not; when he shews me, that he is endeavouring to lead my passions where they cannot follow, it occasions a very disagreeable sensation. Affectation, though it is always out of place, and seldom fails to defeat its own intentions, is never more so than when it appears in the pulpit or the reading-desk; where it is shocking to see the airs of the theatre, and to hear a preacher enforcing his observations with the voice of an actress expiring upon the stage.

What is unnatural cannot be just; and nothing can be affecting which is not natural. Therefore in all reading, we must have regard to the sense, to the matter, and the occasion: then we shall read with propriety, and what we deliver will have the proper effect.

One rule ought never to be forgotten: that the reader or speaker should seem to feel in himself what he delivers to others; *si vis me flere dolendum est ipsi tibi.* The principle is certain, and even mechanical; for in all machines, no part moves another without being first moved itself. This is the soul of all elocution, with which a common beggar at a door has the powers of an orator, and without which, all the rules of art are cold and insignificant. A barrel-organ can be made to play a most elaborate piece of music truly and correctly; but the sounds want that animation which they receive from the finger of a living player, who is himself delighted with what he is performing.

For practice in reading, a plain narrative has not variety enough to exercise the different turns of the voice: speeches, reasonings, controversies, and dialogues are more proper; and there is great choice in the Scriptures. The speeches of St. Paul to Agrippa, Festus, and the Jews; his reasonings in the Epistle to

the Romans; the conversation of the Jews with the man that was born blind; are all excellent to teach propriety and force of expression. Some of the Night-Thoughts of Dr. Young are so difficult, that they cannot be expressed without some study and a perfect understanding of the sense; but when understood, they will contribute much to farther improvement. I am cautious of recommending speeches in plays; not only because the matter is too often corrupting, but because there is danger of falling from thence into an affected over-strained manner, which is always to be avoided.

The prose pieces of Swift are so correct and humorous, and are stored with such variety of speech, reasoning, and dialogue, that they cannot be read without advantage; and therefore I would recommend them to your perusal for this purpose. In a future letter I shall give you some advice about style and composition.

LETTER VIII.

ON STYLE.

By a style in writing we mean that language in which an author expresses the matter he is writing upon; and a good style is constituted by proper words in proper places.

A complete sentence is called a period; which consists of several members or clauses, and those members are composed of single words. Short periods are fit for light and familiar compositions, as epistles and

dialogues. Long periods are proper to more grave and stately discourses, as set speeches, historical narrations, and moral or theological essays. It is a great point of art, and requires much experience, to accommodate the length and form of a period to the matter treated of, or the particular passion to which the writer addresses himself. These are niceties which I shall not dwell upon, as belonging more properly to the figures of rhetoric; but give you, instead of them, this general rule, that no period ought to be so long, or so complicated, as to be obscure; for darkness in language, like the darkness of the night, takes away the sight of all objects, so that they are without effect, however great and excellent they may be in themselves. To avoid this evil, be sure that you understand the connection of what you say, and forbear to embarrass your sentences with frequent and impertinent parentheses, which happen only because your ideas are not regularly disposed in your mind when you commit them to paper. You must also be clear in the grammar of your expressions, for false grammar defiles a sentence, and admits of no apology. The best word you can use to denote any thing is that word which is applied to it in the common conversation of those who speak correctly in their own language. If there is a native English word for your purpose, always use it in preference to one of Greek or Roman extraction. You cannot imagine how the sense of any discourse is weakened by superfluous words, unnecessary epithets, and far-fetched expressions. Nothing but pedantry and affection can tempt you to use *debility* instead of weakness; *stolidity* for foolishness; or *puerility* for childishness; unless, perhaps, on some occasions, when we are driven to a variety of terms to avoid the poverty of repetition.

A curious choice of fine words, for the embellishment of our diction upon a common subject, is as disgusting as an affected theatrical air in pronunciation, and is analogous to a foppishness of appearance in our persons: the fop shews you, that he means to be more than a gentleman, and the affected writer would be something more than a scholar. I cannot help being pleased and edified with Mr. Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs, where the attention is kept up by the disposition of the scenery, and the choice of the matter which is forcibly and pathetically expressed; but I find myself often hurt by the introduction of some fine word where a plain one would have done better, and would have been more proper to the solemnity of the occasion. In some other of his meditations, where the matter is not so striking, and more thinly spread, the pedantry is unpardonable, and the affectation altogether surfeiting, though his manner is greatly admired by persons of little judgment.

If the mind is sincere, it cannot be hunting for curious terms while it is impressed with deep sentiments, which will never fail to bring their words with them. When the mind is at the same time greatly and impertinently employed, it will be under the like suspicion with an actress upon the stage, who is seen to be solicitous about the plaits of her clothes, while she is uttering sentiments of horror and despair.

Let me also caution you against pedantic innovations in your *spelling*, which some writers are attempting to introduce amongst us. There are instances where a reformation in this respect may be reasonable and proper: but I have seen many improvements which are improper and absurd, because our derivatives have come down to us from the Latin through the medium of French, and cannot be reduced to the

Latin itself without violence. If the principle should be admitted, whither will it carry us? If you write *florish* instead of *flourish*, because it comes from *floreo*, then you ought also to write *flore*, instead of *flower*, because it comes from *flos*, which has no *w* in it.

A style easy, pleasant, correct, and properly adorned, is of great value, because it gives life and beauty to every subject it sets forth. It is like the rich and improved soil of a garden, which adds to the size and form of every vegetable planted in it. How much less interesting are the actions of Cæsar, when Hirtius has the telling of them; but in his own style there is magic.

When a writer has a bad design, and would recommend to us any false and dangerous opinions, a good style has a very bad effect; as the soil of a garden, which improves wholesome vegetables, gives strength and magnitude to weeds. Men of ill principles know this; and are therefore very attentive and curious to please a reader's ear with elegance of expression and propriety of language. A devil undressed would be but little able to make his way in this world.

To form an English style, you must be conversant with the best English writers: you must not only read them, but converse with them, and live with them; weighing their expressions and imbibing their phraseology into your constitution: for which purpose you will do well if you extract what is most worthy of observation, and place it in a collection, that it may remain with you.

The authors I would recommend for this purpose are Bacon (Lord Verulam), Swift, South, Sprat, Addison, Roger North, and Dr. Middleton. Lord Bacon excels in richness of metaphor, and majesty of diction; as you will soon discover, if you read attentively his

Advancement of Learning, a piece which every English scholar should almost know by heart: but as the English language has received many alterations since Bacon's time, some of his phrases are now too formal and obsolete. Swift has such vigour, clearness, and plainness in his style as will never be exceeded; and his writing may be taken as the standard of the English language. South has strength and ornament; and exclusive of the goodness of his matter, is one of the finest declaimers in the world. Sprat, in his History of the Royal Society, is free and elegant to the highest degree, but rather too florid. When it is seen that the style is overmuch refined, we think a writer has a design upon us, and take offence at it. Dr. North, Master of Trinity College, in Cambridge, next after Barrow, and Greek professor, was so captivated with Sprat's History, that he said he would be content to read no other book for a whole year, if he might acquire by it the style of that writer *.

Roger North is excellent at a narrative; his language is animated, forcible, and humorous; but he is apt to transgress by introducing exotic words and expressions. Middleton in his English is a pattern of classical art and elegance. The colouring of honest writers may be compared to the beauties of a flower; but Middleton's ornaments are the colours of a snake: and therefore no young man should venture to improve himself from such an author, till he is settled in his principles, and can distinguish with safety between the manner and the matter, the art and the artificer.

Dryden never wrote much prose: but what he did

* Life of Sir Dudley and Dr. John North, by Roger North, Esq. Page 263.

write is capital in its kind; it is nervous in the sense, and highly adorned in the periods.

There is another excellent English writer but little known, Dr. Young, the father of the poet, who, in his two volumes of Sermons, discovers such strength and propriety of expression, with such chaste and genuine ornament of style, that he must charm and improve every judicious reader; for his materials are as excellent as the workmanship.

Anson's Voyage is a fine correct narrative, and a pattern in that sort of writing; I think it the nearest of any work we have in English to Cæsar's Commentaries. In some of the prose pieces of Dr. Johnson, especially his latter political pamphlets, you will find all the beauties of style and expression; of which, notwithstanding some very pardonable singularities, we must allow him to be a great master; and you may depend on him also as a friend to truth and virtue. His Lives of our English Poets, lately published, are inimitably written; and while they give you an example of style and composition, they will place before you, in a striking point of view, the inconsistency which is often found in the human character. They will shew you how the powers of wit and profligacy of morals, manly literature and childish improvidence, elegance of speech and roughness of manners, strength of imagination and absurdity of principle, are tempered together in some of the sons of Parnassus; whence you will infer, that virtue is preferable to genius, and that integrity without learning is better than learning without sobriety.

Our pleaders at the bar, and people of the law, having great practice in the English language, become well acquainted with the powers of it, and many of them have excelled as patterns of English elo-

quence; of which many great examples occur in the charges which are to be found in the State Trials.

Since the time when I attempted to improve my English, (which I brought very bad from the University) some new writers have risen into fame, such as Hume, &c. who are to be regarded in literature as thieves and assassins are in society, and are therefore to be read with caution, as Middleton their kinsman. When truth and elegance meet together, we are safe as well as happy; but it is a dangerous employment, and scarcely worth the experiment, to gather flowers upon rotten ground, where there is a dirty bottom, which threatens to swallow us up.

LETTER IX.

ON THE IDIOMS OF LANGUAGE.

Every language has its own proper forms of expression, called *idioms*, which mean proprieties or peculiarities. If, when you speak or write in one language, you make use of the idiom proper to another, you are guilty of what is called a *barbarism*. The term is commonly applied to offences against the classical modes of speech, established by the authority of the best writers among the Latins or the Greeks. The Greeks and Romans accounted all nations barbarians but themselves; therefore to speak barbarous Latin is to speak in that language with the idiom peculiar to the language

of some other nation. According to the idiom of the English language we use the phrase, *to get by heart*, which the Latins express by *mandare memoriæ*, to commit to memory; and *recitare memoriter*, to repeat by memory: but if you were to speak in Latin as you do in English, and say, *gignere corde*, you would be guilty of a gross barbarism. We should laugh at a Frenchman, who, speaking of one that came to an untimely end, should say, "he did not die of his own proper death;" but in French *sa propre mort* is equivalent to what we call in English *a natural death*. How ridiculous it would sound to us in English, if a Frenchman, hearing one calling out with a loud voice, should say, "he cries with his head full;" but so they express themselves in their own language: *Crier a pleine tête*, is, to cry with as loud a voice as your head can bear; and *crier a tue tête*, is to bawl so loud as to rend it. Languages differ very much in the use of the negative: in Latin and English two negatives make an affirmative; in Greek, French, and Italian, they are still negative; as *la scrittura* non *sa niente, ed insegna ogni cosa*, "writing knows nothing (*Ital.* does *not know nothing*), and yet teaches all things." It is very useful to compare the proverbial idioms of different languages. When we see how they have adopted different ideas to express the same sentiment, and come by so many different ways, some of them very wise and ingenious, to the same end, the prospects of the mind are greatly opened and enlarged. My meaning may be illustrated by a single instance; we say in English, *to pass the time away*; and gaming, or any other like diversion, is called *pastime*: but in French they affix a moral idea to the same expression, and call it *tuer le tems*, to kill time; as if every vain and useless employment were a spe-

cies of murder, against that which is most valuable in this world, and dies a natural death much sooner than we could wish, and after all will certainly rise up against us in judgment.

We commonly use the word *barbarous* to denote the *cruel spirit* of uncivilized and savage nations; but the term originally belonged to confusion of speech, or the unintelligible language of a strange people; and it is so applied in the Scriptures: *If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh* a barbarian, *and he that speaketh shall be* a barbarian *unto me.* A barbarian, therefore, in the primitive sense of the word, is a person of a strange language: the term itself is derived from the word *Babel,* by a substitution, which is very frequent, of one liquid consonant for another; and it is remarkable that the word *Babel,* as a monument of the confusion which happened there, has passed into all languages: the Greeks have it in their βαρβαρος, βαμβαινω, for βαλβαινω, *to stammer;* whence the Latin *barbarus, balbus,* and *balbutio;* the French *babiller;* the English *babble, babbler,* &c.

LETTER X.

ON THE USE OF HISTORY.

In a former letter I have mentioned *history* as an amusement; but here I mean to recommend it as a *science.* To persons of a private station, it is not requisite: but to every gentleman, who may be called

to an active and public life in the service of his country, it is absolutely necessary. The higher his rank, the more necessary is this science: if he is a prince, he is under greater obligation to study history than any of his subjects.

History shews us the laws of different countries, and the manners of different ages; the principles on which empires have risen to power and greatness, and the errors by which they have declined and fallen into decay. It teaches us the fatal effects of intestine divisions, whether arising from the mercenary views of self-interest and ambition, or from visionary ideas of liberty and false principles of policy. These things are worth the consideration of Englishmen at all times, especially at present. I am sorry to say it of my countrymen, (who in the main are a sensible and generous people;) but, they are factious by nature, and are unhappily encouraged to opposition by the present turn of their education. Those false ideas of liberty, government, and power, of which we are now reaping the fruits, have been propagated among them for many years past, and with as much assiduity as if the salvation of the people had depended upon them. From the doctrines of Algernon Sydney and Mr. Locke, which have so long been held in admiration, rebellion hath grown up as naturally as thorns and thistles spring from their proper seeds. These doctrines were exploded long ago by an able writer, whose work being unpopular at the time of its publication, when parties ran very high in this country, hath fallen into oblivion. History may in good measure dispel this charm, by teaching you, that there never was an instance of any government arising from *compact and the general consent of the people*, from whence our theorists suppose all governments

to have been derived. The idea is an absurdity; because kings, as the fathers of families, were prior to their subjects. All the great kingdoms of the earth either came by descent, or were gained by conquest; and he who gave the victory gave the kingdom. Mr. Selden was of opinion, that there is actually no power upon earth but the power of the sword. So I think; but then I must have leave to add, that this power of the sword belongs properly to him who created the iron of it; and that the sword held by government for the taking away of any man's life, is held by his commission; the reason of which is plain enough, if this were a place to insist upon it.

History will shew you the comparative inconveniences of the different sorts of governments; that popular governments, especially the aristocratic, are the most expensive and tyrannical. That when liberty is rampant, and power gets into the hands of those, who by nature or law have no right to it, it must be bought out of them again, with the money of those who neither share the power nor partake of the plunder of their country. If you look at home, you will discover that the English government hath become more venal, expensive, and distressed, in proportion as it hath approached nearer to the popular form, by encroachments upon the old legal rights of the crown; which, as Lord Lyttelton has well observed in his History of Henry II. are the security of the people against the oppression of the nobility. The system of venality was established by Sir Robert Walpole, who openly professed that he had set a price upon every man's conscience, and turned all public business into a scramble.

When you read of wars, you will meet with examples of successful foresights, and fatal oversights;

what opportunities have been lost for want of expedition and resolution; in particular, that no plots and rebellions were ever suppressed, but by unexpected and vigorous exertions in the beginning; and that no such exertions can well be made where the power is lodged in too many hands, and measures are consequently slow and fluctuating; and what is still worse, the secrets of the state are bandied about so publicly in debate, that they are always known to the enemy, who have warning to direct their own motions, so as to defeat every design that is formed against them. Secrecy is the wisdom of power; and without it, all power is like a body without a soul.

You will see how the talents of great commanders have wrought wonders when occasion required. Such was the constructing of a wooden bridge over the Rhine by Julius Cæsar, for the passage of his troops into Germany. And such was the conduct of Xenophon, a scholar and a soldier like Julius Cæsar, when he led his Greeks safe back through a vast tract of the enemies country, after Cyrus, who had engaged them in his service, was defeated and slain. I have heard the following anecdote of Wolfe, who was a military genius as well as a man of courage; that he was shewing some general officers how expert his men were at a new mode of attacking and retreating upon hills; and when he stept up to one of the officers after the performance, and asked him what he thought of it; I think, said he, I see something here of the history of the Carduchi, who harassed Xenophon, and hung upon his rear in his retreat over the mountains. You are right, said Wolfe; I had it from thence; and I see you are a man of reading; but our friends there are surprised at what I have shewn them, because they have *read nothing*.

You may learn how dangerous it is under any circumstances whatsoever to listen to the reports of an enemy, from the fatal and very striking example of Cæsar's legion in Gaul, cut off by leaving their winter-quarters, at the perfidious remonstrances of Ambiorix.

When you read of the ancient Greeks and Romans, you will be animated with that noble spirit of defending their country, which then prevailed, without the mercenary motives which have taken the place of it in latter ages; when there are other ways for men to raise and enrich themselves without public merit.

Though modern history is necessary, on account of the changes which have been made in the art of war, you will find that the ancient discipline was better, and the lives and characters of soldiers more military than at present, when they who strove for the mastery were temperate in all things, and inured to every kind of hardship.

You will perhaps observe, that sieges cost more time, and blood, and treasure, while prosperous battles in the field win more country and cities, which commonly surrender to the conqueror. When a war is carried into an enemy's country, it is maintained at their charge: the soldiers are obliged to more vigilance and a stricter discipline: the aggressor is animated, and the invaded are discouraged.

From a multitude of similar instances, too numerous to be pointed out particularly, gentlemen by reading history may improve their minds, and acquire that experience of things which will fit them for advice and action when their country shall have need of their assistance: for courage without conduct, and industry without information, are of little value.

LETTER XI.

ON TASTE.

What we call *Taste*, in the metaphorical sense of the word, is that faculty by which we distinguish beauty and excellence in the works of art; as the palate distinguishes what is pleasant in meat and drink. This latter faculty is natural; the former, so far as it signifies judgment, is the result of education and experience, and can be found only in a cultivated mind. Arts and sciences are so nearly related among themselves, that your judgment in one will always want some assistance from your knowledge of another; whence it comes to pass, that of people who pretend to taste, not one in twenty is really possessed of it. A spectator has heard others say, that such a figure in a certain picture is very fine; therefore he says so; and perhaps he is really struck with its beauties when they are pointed out: but in order to make the discovery for himself, it is necessary he should have some acquaintance with the anatomy of the human figure, its due proportion, and the rules by which bodies are justly represented in perspective. If the figure is coloured, he should know what tints are natural to the skin, before he can pronounce whether they are true upon the canvass.

I had frequent opportunities of seeing from a particular instance how prone all ignorant persons are to prefer the worse to the better, and admire false excellence rather than true. In the seat of a certain no-

bleman, in the county where I was born, there is a very fine hall with two equestrian paintings in it nearly as large as life, one at each end of the room. Of these two one is as graceful and highly finished as any picture of the sort in the kingdom: the other has little more merit than the figure of St. George upon a sign-post; but having a gaudy appearance, with a very ill-judged glare of light in it, every vulgar eye is taken with it; while the exquisite beauties of its companion are neglected.

Hogarth, in his Analysis of Beauty, has laid down some of the best rules extant for enabling a person to distinguish elegance of drawing and propriety of design. His Line of Beauty, as he calls it, is a flowing line with contrary flexures, something like the letter S, but not so much inflected, which takes place in the most elegant forms that nature presents to us; and will therefore communicate the like elegance to works of art, when it is judiciously introduced and applied. We trace it in the stream that winds through the vale, in the curvatures of hills, the foliage of flowers, the elevations and depressions of the muscles in the human figure, the graceful inclinations and attitudes of the body; and a thousand other instances. The remarks which Hogarth himself has made upon it in that work (as original as any of this age or country) are very just and striking; and they teach us, that beauty is not the creature of human fancy, as vulgarly supposed, but a real excellence, to be accounted for and demonstrated on actual principles of science. For farther instruction in this matter I must refer you to the book itself, which deserves not only to be read but studied.

But there is another source of beauty, which has little or no dependence upon that famous line: and yet, if it is considered, I think it will carry astists to

some uncommon perfection in their works, and assist a spectator in judging better of what they have composed.

Harmony in music has certain measures, which may be transferred with advantage to visible objects; and the eye will be delighted on the same principles with the ear: that is, by the like proportions and combinations. Though I propose this analogy, I would by no means be understood to make it an exclusive source of beauty: I am sensible there are others widely differing from it. I only mean to shew you how it appears to me as one of the plainest and most universal rules we have to direct us in so critical a subject. What I have to say will be best understood by those who have some little knowledge of the theory of music, which I have endeavoured to explain to you on another occasion, so far as it is necessary to our present purpose. The *key-note* and its *third* and *fifth* constitute a perfect system of sound: with less than these the ear is not satisfied, and you cannot have more without repetition. I would hence infer, that every composition of a painter, which will admit of such a partition, should consist of three parts: and in good pictures, properly fancied, we shall generally find them. There is one principal object on one side; another to answer it on the other side; and a third betwixt them. "Simplicity," says Hogarth, "in the disposition of a great variety, is best accomplished by following nature's constant rule, of dividing composition into three or five parts or parcels; the painters accordingly divide theirs into fore-ground, middle-ground, and distance or back-ground: which simple and distinct quantities *mass* together that variety which entertains the eye; as the different parts of base, tenor,

and treble, in a composition of music, entertain the ear *."

Here you are to remember that every musical ratio resolves itself into two, one of which is always greater than the other. The interval of a *fifth* does not consist of two equal *thirds*, but of a third *major*, and a third *minor*: it seems therefore, that a picture would want harmony, if the intermediate of three objects were exactly in the middle; where, by the way, a judicious painter never places it, but always inclining to one side. Suppose you have a moon-light piece; in which there is a group of shadowy objects (as trees) on one side, and another to balance it on the other side, with the moon betwixt. If your two groupes are equal in size, and alike in figure, and your moon in the centre, the picture will be very stiff and ill-composed. Your groupes must, therefore, differ in size and figure, and project differently into the piece, and the moon must incline to one of the sides; and then the composition will have harmony. In the famous picture of General Wolfe, which every body knows, there are three groupes of figures, diversified and disposed with great judgment, and the principal object of the piece is not truly in the middle †. This tripartite disposition

* Analysis of Beauty, p. 112. I had ascribed this sentiment to Hogarth: but on farther examination I see it was published the year before his book came out, in an Essay on Musical Expression by Mr. Avison, page 26, where this analogy is much insisted upon.

† An ingenious Painter, who came to my house while I was transcribing this letter for the press, and heard me speaking of this subject, said the principle was not new to him, and that he was certain it had been advanced by some great master. The next day, he brought me the following observation by the translator of Fresnoy's Art of Painting. "Annibal Caracci did not believe that a picture could be good in which there were above twelve

is a principle of beauty, when we consider a piece laterally, that is, parallel to the horizontal line: and the same rule obtains when we consider a landscape in its *recession* from the eye. It is divided (as Hogarth has observed) into three distances, which are called, the *fore-ground*, the *middle-ground*, and the *off-skip*. The objects on the fore-ground are distinct in their lines, and strong in light and shade. Those on the middle-ground are somewhat fainter: and those in the back-ground partake of that blue colour which the intermediate air gives to all distant objects. But here again the measures should vary as before, because equality produces no harmony.

This tripartite disposition may be regarded at first as a source of beauty which is arbitrary and fanciful; but I have so often found myself struck with it, before I had considered it critically, that if I were to lay out an advantageous piece of ground, I would introduce it wherever I had an opportunity, and trust for the event to the taste of the spectator. If you have less than three objects presented to the eye, the composition is deficient and empty: if you have more the sight is dissipated, and you must find some way of reducing, or, as Hogarth calls it, *massing* them. I suspect that the celebrated statue of the Laocoon, however excellent in other respects, strikes every eye with more pleasure because it consists of three figures, all contributing to the same effect.

In the use of perspective, regard should always be had to the rule of making unequal divisions. The cen-

figures. It was Albano who told our author this, and from his mouth I had it. The reasons which he gave, were, first, that he believed there ought not to be above THREE GROUPES of figures in any picture." See Fresnoy on Painting, page 102.

tre of the object should never be in the centre of the piece. This is the case with the plans and elevations of builders, which have therefore no merit to the eye as pictures. There must be an obliquity in the lines, which produces harmony and variety; and hence a good painter never gives you the full face of a building, nor places a street or an avenue receding directly from the eye, and vanishing into the middle of the picture: all his measures run obliquely; and it will be found that his distribution is never so pleasing as when the sight has three principal points to rest upon.

If we make a transition to architecture, there the three dimensions of length, breadth, and height, which are common to all solid bodies, will never strike us so much with a sense of beauty as when they are accommodated to one another in some proportions deduced by analogy from the theory of music: and such measures, whether they are applied in the external elevation, or the internal divisions, will have a pleasing effect, though the spectator is ignorant of the cause; for musical sounds please the ears of those who know nothing about their proportions. Thus, for example, if we would proportion the dimensions of a room in the best manner, let us take the measures from the harmonic divisions of a musical string, called a monochord; whatever note the whole string sounds, two thirds of that whole (the tension remaining the same) will sound a fifth; three-fourths will sound a fourth; one half will sound an octave, or eighth. To apply these to our present purpose, let the length of a room be twenty-four feet, the breadth sixteen, and the height twelve; then will the breadth be to the length in the ratio of two to three, which is that of the diapente or fifth, a most perfect concord; the height will be to the breadth in the ratio of three to four, which is that of

the diatessaron, or fourth; and to the length in the ratio of one to two, which is that of the diapason, or octave. Every person that has eyes will pronounce such a room to be finely proportioned, and feel the harmony of the dimensions without knowing them. The numbers 36, 24, and 18, having the same ratios to each other, may answer as well. Utility and convenience may require very different dimensions; but still, if we study elegance, we must have regard to the same rule. It may be necessary that the length should be to the breadth in the ratio of two to one, which is that of the octave; or three to one, which is that of the twelfth; or four to one, which is that of disdiapason, or the double octave.

If you would try, by a simple experiment, what proportion will do, only make the figure of a cross with two plain right lines, in which let the breadth be to the length as two to three, and let the point of transection, or distance of the arms from the bottom, compared with the whole length, be also as two to three; such a figure will strike the eye with its symmetry, and perhaps be the most beautiful of the kind that can be constructed; while other inharmonious measures might be introduced, which would be as ungrateful to the sight as discords are to the ear.

But to return to our great principle of *tripartition*, (if I may be allowed to make a new term for a new thing) the propriety and effects of it are so extensive, that it meets us almost every where. What is said of the sight, when compared with the hearing, will hold good also of the intellect, which is another kind of sight, the sight of the mind. In oratory, does not experience teach us, that the association of three ideas satisfies the mind, as the union of three sounds satisfies the ear? No scholar is a stranger to the fulness

and beauty of those three words, when set together, *veni, vidi, vici;* the effect of which is increased by a consonance of *alliteration,* each word beginning with the same letter.

In the art of reasoning, every syllogism consists of three propositions, all of which have a mutual consonance, if they make good logic. But here I am sensible that the parallel may raise a very ridiculous idea in the mind of a musical reader, if he imagines himself to hear a logical concert, by one person repeating the major proposition, another the minor, and a third the conclusion, and all speaking their parts at once. However, it is certainly true, and to our purpose, that as in musical concord two extremes have consent with the mean, and with one another, so in logic two ideas agree with a third, which is called the middle term, and all make good harmony together in the conclusion.

The principle of tripartition, as deducible from music, seems on the whole to be an actual source of pleasure to the judgment; and it is supported by such a variety of instances, that it must be founded in nature. When we are upon a right scent, truth will seem to run along before us of its own accord. There is one remarkable example which I have omitted; and it is this; that the beauty of the light, which gives beauty to all visible objects, is itself constituted by three colours, into which it divides itself, the red, the yellow, and the blue, which are the only original colours, all others being compounded of these; and a pure brightness is the result of them when their effects are united. These strange coincidences between the elements of different arts have often filled my mind with wonder. All I would infer from this uniformity is, that the principle I have proposed is not imaginary, but real, in nature;

and if so your taste will be certainly improved by the application of it: for nature is the ground of art, and a sure rule of pleasure to the judgment.

With regard to composition in painting, which was the art I had chiefly in view from the beginning of this letter, as a polite subject in which every gentleman should have some discernment; the beauties of it, when considered at large, consist in propriety of action; grace of attitude, which is also called *ease;* truth of proportion; and anatomical perspective. It would require another letter to explain this particularly: I shall only say, that all these beauties concur in the pieces of Sir Joshua Reynolds perhaps more truly than they were ever found *together* in the works of any other master. It is now very fashionable to see faults in his pictures; but I think chiefly with those who are slow in distinguishing real excellence. Look at the best family pictures of Vandyke, you generally see all the figures standing inanimate, like kings and queens, with nothing to do, but to look at you from their frames: but Sir Joshua strikes out a general design, to which every figure in the composition contributes something; instead of looking at you they are engaged in some business of their own; and while you look at them you become interested in it yourself. Thus his family pictures, instead of losing their value with age, like an almanac, will retain as long as they can last, and that even in the eyes of strangers to the family, the merit of historical compositions.

In this copious subject I might have descended to many other particulars: but if you read Hogarth's book carefully, and attend to the few observations I have here added to it, you will acquire what Aristotle calls δευτερον ομμα, a *second sight;* that sight with

which men of education see things, while the ignorant overlook them.

To Hogarth's treatise I would add the Seven Discourses delivered by Sir Joshua Reynolds to the Royal Academy. Many deep, many subtle, many refined observations, are there expressed in correct and elegant language: and if you should not learn the art of painting, nor desire to learn it, you may thence learn the arts of writing and expression, in which every scholar will be glad to improve himself. In this view I would recommend these discourses to your consideration. To painters they form an excellent treatise on the sublime: to other readers they offer many great and original sentiments, which may be transferred with advantage to other subjects.

LETTER XII.

ON THE ORIGIN AND USE OF FABLES.

Now you are employed in the exercise of raising moral observations from the matter of Æsop's Fables, it may be worth our while to enquire a little into their nature and original.

The ancients made great use of fables, and with good reason; for whatever is conceived by the mind must enter by the senses: and moral truth is never so easily understood, as when it is exemplified by a reference to some parallel case in nature, particularly to the various instincts of brute creatures, which were undoubtedly designed by the Creator to answer this end, by representing to us the several characters and

colours of moral good and evil in a way which even children can understand.

The origin of fables is not very clear from the Heathen account of them. It is probable they are nearly as ancient as the history of mankind: or, at least, that there never was a time of which we have any knowledge when they were not familiar in Palestine and Egypt, from whence they were borrowed by the Greeks and Romans.

Suidas says the fable of the Eagle and Nightingale in Hesiod is the oldest extant, and that Hesiod was a hundred years before Æsop. The use of fables to orators is exemplified from the well-known instance of Menenius Agrippa, who reconciled the populace to the senate at Rome on occasion of an insurrection by repeating to them the fable of the *Belly and the Members*. When Themistocles admonished the Athenians not to change their magistrates, he argued from the fable of the *Fox and the Swarm of Flies*.

The Greeks were always notorious for stealing all sorts of learning, and claiming to themselves the merit of every useful invention. The *fable* is the same with the *parable*, the earliest specimen of which occurs in the book of Judges, where Jotham signifies to the people the temper and fate of an usurper under the similitude of the trees going forth to choose them a king; in which composition inanimate things, as trees, are made to speak and reason just as they do in the fables of Æsop. The fruitful trees decline the office, and the bramble offers his services and gets into power. The moral of which, as applicable to the person of Abimelech, was this; that the desire of reigning does not prevail in wise and good men, who would feed the people and protect them under the shadow of their authority; but chiefly in men of rough minds

and bloody intentions, who harass the people, and are at length consumed along with them in the unjust exercise of their power.

All the parables of Christ are spiritual discourses, very nearly allied to the form of the fable, and were delivered for the sake of some moral, which would be either obscure without any illustration, or offensive to the hearers if it were delivered to them in plain terms. When the prophet Nathan approached the king, to convict him of his sin and bring him to repentance, the case would not admit of any direct reproof; so, you see, he gains his attention, and steals upon his affections, by putting a case to him, in which he seemed to have no immediate concern: and when his indignation was raised against a fictitious person, the prophet turned it upon himself, with that striking application, "Thou art the man." Then there was no retracting: he had already condemned himself in the judgment he had passed upon the cruel offender in the parable.

As to Æsop, the reputed author of the fables which go under his name, the accounts we have of him are so obscure and contradictory, that his character itself seems to be fabulous. His fables are plainly collections taken from different ages and different countries. In the 13th chapter of the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, the fable of the *Brass Kettle*, as a dangerous companion to the *Earthen Pot*, is clearly referred to, and was therefore a fable of the East. Some others, which we find under the name of Æsop, seem to be alluded to in the course of the same chapter. The fable of the Fox and the Grapes must be of the same original; for we never heard that foxes are given to plunder vineyards either in Greece or Italy; but the fact was common in Palestine, and is alluded

to in the Song of Solomon, ch. ii. ver. 15. The stories which are told of Æsop, that he was a *slave*, that his mistress persecuted him, that he had a golden cup, and some other particulars, bespeak a very strong resemblance to the history of Joseph, so famed for his wisdom in Egypt, the land of fables and hieroglyphics. The names are plainly the same; and therefore I am rather inclined to think, that the history of Æsop was either borrowed from that of Joseph; or that he was a slave or a captive of that name from the East, who brought much of the traditional wisdom of his own country with him into the West. But when all circumstances are considered, I think the former is the more probable opinion.

LETTER XIII.

ON THE USE OF HEATHEN LEARNING.

In the middle ages of the Church many Christians were very shy of the heathen writers; they were afraid lest the heathen principles of religion, morality, and policy, should be imbibed together with their poetry and oratory, and corrupt the minds of their children and scholars. Much was said of what had happened to St. Jerom; that in a vision he dreamed he was severely scourged for reading Cicero. But St. Austin, who was a man of great devotion, and one of the first scholars of the Church, assures us, that one of Cicero's

pieces inscribed to Hortensius, first gave him an appetite to a more divine sort of wisdom, and that he embraced Christianity in consequence of the sentiments which that treatise had raised in his mind. Basil, another great scholar of the Church, and a man of unquestioned piety, recommended the prudent reading of profane authors to some young people under his tuition. After this example, therefore, I must advise you to read with *prudence*, and with a proper mixture of caution; not trusting yourself to the reasonings of profane writers, till you are well grounded in principles of truth; and then, as the bee can settle upon a poisonous flower without being hurt, and can even extract honey from it, so may you improve your talents for the highest purposes, and arm yourself more effectually for the defence of sacred truth, by studying profane orators, poets, and historians.

Writers are frequently rising up, with ill designs against your religion, who polish their style, and take the utmost pains to adorn it after the pattern of the best writers of antiquity. Some scholars will always be wanted on the other side, to turn the powers of composition against them; and truth will never fail to add such a force and weight to their embellishments, that the enemy will not be able to stand against them. He that reads the speech of St. Paul to king Agrippa, and considers it as a composition, will never be persuaded that cold and beggarly diction is requisite in a Christian apologist. The apostle, though a rigid Jew by his education, discovered on occasion a familiar acquaintance with the heathen poets.

LETTER XIV.

ON THE CONSENT BETWEEN THE SCRIPTURES AND THE HEATHEN POETS.

Some ingenious men, of more wit than experience, have objected to the Christian revelation, because they find no traces of it in their favourite classical writers. The testimony of an adversary is always valuable; but upon this occasion we have no reason to expect it from those who had their reasons for vilifying the Jews, and all that belonged to them. If we find any thing to our purpose, we must have it as it were by accident; and of this sort much may be collected.

You have began to read Horace. If you examine his third ode, you will see him confirming the Sacred History of the Scripture in some particulars not unworthy of your notice, which could be derived to the heathens only from the fountains of Divine Revelation, or from tradition proceeding from the same original. What can we understand by the *audax Japeti genus,* but the posterity of Japhet, that son of Noah, from whom the European nations are descended? Japhet was the first father of the Greeks and Romans after the flood, as surely as Adam was the father of all mankind. Then, what is Prometheus's *fraud against Heaven,* but that offence, whatever it was, which brought death into the world? Here we have a theft acknowledged against Heaven, and all manner of evils and diseases are sent upon earth in consequence of it:

Post ignem ætherea domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors.

And what is more remarkable, he tells us of the change which was made in the period of human life, with the reason of it;

Semotique prius tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.

Here it is affirmed by implication, that death was originally at a greater distance, and that the divine justice shortened human life slowly and unwillingly, not till the increasing corruption of the world had made it necessary to lessen the opportunities of sin. The lives of men before the flood, were of many hundred years; but when *all flesh had corrupted his way*, then the curse took place at the flood, and man's life was contracted nearly to the present span. How should Horace know this? Or how should Hesiod know it, from whom he borrowed it? for it is precisely the doctrine of the Mosaic history. And as it carries us back to the times before the flood, of which no human history was ever written, it must have been taken either from the Scripture itself, or from some tradition, which, if it could be traced, would carry us back to the same original.

These things then, though they are *in* Horace, are not *of* Horace; nor are they of the Greeks or the Romans: but of Divine revelation: and it is remarkable, that we should meet with so many sacred doctrines in so small a compass. I take the opportunity to speak of this while the ode is under our consideration: but when you are farther acquainted with hea-

then learning, you will find abundant evidence of the same sort, which they who are disaffected to the Christian system, and would set up the classics against the Bible, will never like to hear of; but will endeavour to discountenance all such things, and dismiss them in the lump, as if they had no relation to the sacred history, but such as fancy or partiality hath given them.

LETTER XV.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

As you seemed to be entertained with those passages of Horace which are parallel to the Sacred History, I shall lead you on to some more passages of the same sort in other authors; and if you should not understand all of them critically at present, I hope the time will come when you will find little or no difficulty in any of them.

Herod, you know, who was king in Judea at the birth of Christ, slew all the children in Bethlehem. By birth and education he was a Jew, and as such would eat no swine's flesh. Macrobius, a learned heathen writer in the earliest times of the Church, tells us, that the slaughter of infants by Herod was so sudden and indiscriminate, that Herod's own child, then at nurse, was put to death among the rest; which fact being told to the emperor Augustus, he made this reflection upon it, that " it was better to be Herod's hog than

his son." You will naturally argue upon this case, that if Augustus actually said this, Herod's child was slain: if so, the infants were slaughtered in Bethlehem; Jesus Christ was born there; the Wise Men of the East came to worship him, and reported his birth to Herod, &c. as the Gospel relates; for all these circumstances hang together, and account for one another.

Tacitus and Suetonius, both bitter enemies to the Christians, agree in relating that extraordinary circumstance of a persuasion generally prevailing among the heathens, about the time of Christ's birth, that a king should come from the East. The Roman senate were in such a panic at the apprehension of a king, that they were about to make a decree, that no child born in a certain year should be brought up, lest this great king should arise among themselves. Some temporising Jews, called Herodians, flattered Herod that he was the king expected; and it is probable this opinion, which they had infused into him, made him so jealous of a rival, when the birth of Christ was reported to him. Persius, in his fifth satire, alludes to the extraordinay pomp and illumination with which Herod's birth-day was celebrated even in the reign of Nero.

But the manner in which this tradition operated upon Virgil is still more extraordinary, and little short of a prodigy. It produced from that serious and cautious poet, the wonderful eclogue entitled Pollio; the imagery and expressions of which are so different from the Roman style, and so near to the language of the prophet Isaiah, that if this eclogue had been written as early as the days of Hesiod, the infidels of this time would most probably undertake to prove, that the prophet had borrowed from the poet.

Bishop Lowth has shewn, with great judgment, that this eclogue could not possibly be meant of any one of those persons to whom heathen critics have applied it: and it does not appear how we can give any rational account of it, unless we allow that the poet had seen the predictions of the prophet, and accommodated the matter of them to the prevailing expectation of the times; ascribing them unjustly to a Sibylline oracle of heathen original, because nothing great was to be allowed to the Jews.

It will be worth your attention to consider some of the particulars minutely. He calls the time in which this wonderful person is to be born, *ultima ætas*, the *last days*, after the manner of the Scripture: *God*, saith the apostle, hath *in these last days* spoken unto us by his Son. According to the prophet Daniel, the Messiah was *to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.* So saith the poet:

Te duce si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetuâ solvent formidine terras.

The prophet Isaiah saith, *unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace:* the sense of all which is thus expressed in the eclogue,

Ille Deûm vitam accipiet, divisque videbit
Permixtos heroas, et ipse videbitur illis,
Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem
Chara Deûm soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.

The scenery by which the prophet hath figuratively signified the times of the Gospel is minutely adopted,

being extremely beautiful and poetical—*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose; the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,* &c.

At tibi prima puer nullo munuscula cultu
Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus
Mixtaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho.
—— Nec magnos metuent armenta leones.
Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva.
Aspice venturo LÆTENTUR *ut* OMNIA *sæclo.*

If the prophet informs us that serpents should no longer hurt or destroy, the poet saith the same:

Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet——

Instead of expatiating any farther on the passages of this poem, let me recommend to your perusal Mr. Pope's Imitation of it, entitled The Messiah; and let me observe upon the whole, that if Virgil had received his intelligence from Bethlehem, and had thereupon searched the prophets for materials, he could scarcely have risen higher in his description: so very extraordinary is the whole tenor of that eclogue. "Truly," says the learned Casaubon, "I must confess, though I have read that poem pretty often (on Christmas-day, after church-service, I seldom omitted it) yet I still read it with great delight and admiration; not so much for the loftiness of the verse, which is admirable, but for the clear evidence of God's hand and providence in it, which I think none can doubt or question, but they that can believe the world was made of atoms." I borrow this observation from his treatise on *Cre-*

dulity and Incredulity, p. 144; a precious little work, which is worthy to be considered by every Christian scholar.

I have hitherto presented to you such passages as have already attracted the notice of learned men. To these I may now add some others which are less open to observation. If you examine the story of Aristæus, in the fourth book of Virgil's Georgics, you will see the poet opening a passage for him through the waters by a miracle; and he describes the fact in terms as much like those in the book of Exodus, as if they had been professedly taken from it:

——*Simul alta jubet discedere latè*
Flumina, quà juvenis gressus inferret; at illum
Curvata in montis faciem circumstetit unda,
Accepitque sinu vasto——

Georg. iv. 359.

This passage in the Georgics reminds me of another in Callimachus, which describes a miraculous act, parallel to that of Moses in the wilderness, when he smote the rock with his rod, and brought forth water for the people in abundance; as related Numb. xx. 11. Thus does Rhea, in a land of drought, command the earth to bring forth its waters; she lifts up her arm on high, strikes a mountain with her sceptre, which is instantly parted asunder, and pours forth water abundantly:

—— ανταννυσασα θεα μεγαν ὑψοθι πηχυν
Πληξεν ορος σκηπτρῳ το δε οι διχα πουλυ διεστη,
Εκ δ' εχεεν μεγα χευμα.

Call. Προς τον Δια. l. 30.

You will think it less remarkable that the poet Callimachus should use such language, when I tell

you that he was librarian at Alexandria to Ptolemy Philadelphus, at whose command the Bible was translated into Greek by the Seventy Interpreters.

If you go forward in the same book of the Georgics, you will meet with a miraculous generation of bees out of a dead carcase :

> —— *dictu mirabile monstrum,*
> *Aspiciunt ; liquefacta boum per viscera toto*
> *Stridere apes utero, et ruptis effervere costis.*
> Ibid. l. 554.

What is this but the breeding of Samson's bees in the dead carcase of the Lion ; as you have it, Judg. xiv. 8. *He turned aside to see the carcase of the lion ; and behold there was a swarm of bees, and honey, in the carcase of the lion.* The animal is an ox with Virgil, because lions were never offered in sacrifice ; but the circumstance in which the whole wonder consists, is the same. Would the poet have dreamed of such a monstrous production of bees, unless we suppose that this miracle had an alliance with some other, which gave the first hint? For a miracle it is, that bees, which delight in flowers and sweet odours, should ever be found in a putrid stinking carcase. Pliny says, they never settle upon a *dead flower ;* much less upon a *dead body* *.

When Troy was taken and burnt, as Virgil has related the story in the second book of the Æneid, you see Æneas, with his family, flying from the danger, while Creusa loiters behind, and is miraculously lost. Here we have the father of a family escaping with his household from a city on fire, and the wife is unac-

* *Mortuis ne floribus quidem, non modo corporibus insidunt.* Lib. xi. cap. 8.

countably left behind. You will say, this agreement of the circumstances might be accidental; and I cannot deny it: but the circumstances are so extraordinary, and so like to Sodom burning, and Lot flying from it with his family, while his wife is left behind, that I think we shall make the difficulty less, if we suppose, that he who wrote his Pollio in Hebrew imagery, and made a way by a miracle through the waters, and placed a swarm of bees in a dead carcase, was better acquainted with the Scriptures than is commonly imagined.

The story of Orpheus, which is related in the fourth book of the Georgics with all the powers of poetry, must have been formed on some sacred tradition. There is such a mixture of circumstances, that I dare not attempt to account for them; but in the outlines of this story you have a man going down to the regions of death in the character of a mediator, to redeem a beloved wife, who had perished by a serpent concealed in the grass.

In the fabulous character of the *Hero*, so much celebrated by the poets, we have a champion and deliverer, partly divine, partly human, invested with supernatural powers; like the person promised to our first parents, the miraculous seed, who was to conquer the great enemy of man's salvation. And it is remarkable in the character of *Achilles*, the first of heroes in the first of poets, that he is the son of a deity, and vulnerable only in the *heel*: a circumstance so singular, that it points to the true original of the heroic character.

How could it possibly happen, that the idea of an intercourse between heaven and earth, and of a divine person, the son of a deity coming down to the world in a human form, should have been so familiar

to the heathens, and so universal, unless there was at first some authority to ground the persuasion upon? In the wanderings of fancy and imagination there can be no such uniformity. Horace, upon the ground of this doctrine, makes a compliment to Augustus, supposing him to be a divine person, the son of a deity, come down from Heaven in a human form, and ready to ascend thither again upon the wings of the wind, because the world was too wicked a place for him to live in:

Sive mutatâ juvenem figurâ
Ales in terris imitaris, almæ
Filius Maiæ——
Serus in cœlum redeas—
Neve te nostris vitiis iniquum
Ocyor aura
Tollat———

The like intercourse is admitted by Ovid: Jupiter tells the assembly in heaven, how he had descended to the world in a human form, to make inquisition concerning its wickedness before the flood:

——— Summo delabor Olympo
Et Deus humanâ lustro sub imagine terras.
Met. lib. i. 212.

That it was no unusual thing for the gods to visit the earth in a human shape, was an opinion so rooted in the minds of most heathens, that the people at Lystra seeing the effect of a supernatural power in Paul and Barnabas, concluded immediately that they were *gods come down to them in the likeness of men.* Acts xiv. 11.

What can be more express than the testimony of Ovid, in the beginning of his Metamorphoses, to the Mosaic history of the creation, and the subsequent destruction of the world by the flood? The whole has such an affinity to the Scripture, that it looks more like a transcript than a compilation from traditionary fragments. Notices of the fall; and of the curse upon man and the earth; and the depravity which prevails in consequence of some change which has happened to human nature, are to be met with in several authors. Hesiod is the first who tells us, that God sent evil upon earth in return for an offence committed against heaven, in stealing from thence the use of fire, which was supposed to have been originally concealed from man, and obtained by fraud:

Τοις δ' εγω αντι πυρος δωσω κακον—— Εργ. l. 57.

In his Theogony he observes more particularly, that this evil was in a great measure derived from woman, whom Jupiter gave to man with that intention:

Ως δ' αυτως ανδρεσσι κακον θνητοισι γυναικας
Ζευς ὑψιβρεμετης θηκε—— l. 600.

The same author describes the primitive state of man as a golden age, in which men lived as gods, without fear or care; when the earth brought forth all its fruits spontaneously:

Ως τε Θεοι εζωον ακηδεα θυμον εχοντες
——————καρπον δ' εφερε ζειδωρος αρουρα
Αυτοματη πολλον και αφθονον—— Εργ. l. 117.

After this, men grew more and more degenerate, till an age of iron took place, in which good men

were persecuted by bad men, and all manner of wickedness and violence prevailed: then Justice and Righteousness forsook the earth, and fled back to their native skies, leaving behind them all kinds of evils without any remedy.

The sentence of man to labour, by the judgment of the gods upon him, is clearly alluded to by Virgil: and *thorns* and *thistles* are introduced in the express terms of the Scripture: the lines are very remarkable:

Mox et frumentis labor additus, *ut mala culmos*
Esset rubigo, segnisque horreret in arvis
CARDUUS: *intereunt segetes, subit aspera sylva*
Lappæque TRIBULIQUE——

Georg. i. 150.

The necessity of a propitiatory offering, as an atonement for sin, was recognised in most of the heathen sacrifices; of which you will find such circumstantial accounts in Homer, that a ritual might be extracted from him, not very greatly differing from that of the Levitical law. The *first born of lambs* are particularly mentioned as being applied to this sacred use:

Αρνων πρωτογονων ῥεξειν ἱερην ἑκατομβην. Il. δ. 102.

All heathens entertained the opinion, that the wrath of the Deity against sin might be averted by sacrifice and mediation; and nothing but this persuasion, carried to the most extravagant height, could have prompted them to the horrible practice of offering human sacrifices; a practice which obtained in almost every heathen nation of the world. To this doctrine of mediation and atonement Horace alludes, in that passage of his second ode;

Cui dabit partes scelus expiandi
Jupiter ?———

Now ask yourself, how so strange a persuasion as this could ever prevail in the world ? Does your reason inform you, that there is any relation between the pardon of sin and the smoke of an innocent animal first bled to death, and then burnt upon an altar ? No sooner does a philosopher reason upon this case, than he determines otherwise, and rejects the doctrine; of which you may see an instance in the verses of Cato ;

Cum sis ipse nocens, moritur cur victima pro te?
Stultitia est morte alterius sperare salutem.
Lib. iv. dist. 14.

Yet in this persuasion, *foolish* as human reason pronounces it to be, all heathens persevered, from before the days of Homer to the establishment of Christianity, and afterwards. What can we think of a practice so strange, so notorious, and so universal, but that the voice of reason was overpowered by the authority of a divine institution, which custom and tradition spread abroad through all places and all ages ?

I can tell you of another doctrine, in which the most ancient of the poets agree with the Scripture, in opposition to the dictates of human philosophy. I think it never was pretended by any of those modern writers, who have drawn schemes of natural religion for us, that government is of divine authority, and that monarchy is sacred: so far from it, that all deists, to a man, abhor the notion; and are out of patience with the Scripture for giving countenance to it. But it was an established doctrine with the first heathen

writers, Homer and Hesiod, that magistrates are the vicegerents of Heaven; that government is sacred; and that kings derive their *honour* and *support* from God; as you may see by the following passages:

Εκ δε Διος βασιληες——— Hes. Theog. l. 96.

——δικασπολοι, οι τε θεμιστας
Προς Διος ειρυνται——— Iliad, α. 238.

Μητε συ, Πηλειδη, θελ' εριζεμεναι βασιληϊ
Αντιβιην· επει ουποθ' ομοιης εμμορε τιμης
Σκηπτουχος βασιλευς, ῳτε Ζευς κυδος εδωκεν. Ibid. 277.

Θυμος δε μεγας εστι Διοτρεφεος βασιληος
Τιμη δ' εκ Διος εστι——— B. 196.

If this doctrine is contrary to human reason, it was no human invention; if it was not invented, it was received; and if it contradicts that desire of liberty and self-government which prevails in all mankind, it must have been received on some great authority. For it is to be observed, that we are here not insisting merely on the fact, that monarchical government did actually obtain universally in the earliest ages; but also that their writers allowed it in theory as a divine institution; which is the doctrine of revelation. It was also an opinion of heathen antiquity, nearly allied to the foregoing, that property, in the most remote times, was authoritatively divided among the people by princes; not assumed at random, as it must have happened, if nations had emerged at first out of a state of nature:

Romulus, et Liber pater, et cum Castore Pollux
Post ingentia facta, Deorum in templa recepti,
Dum terras hominumque colunt genus, aspera bella
Componunt, AGROS ASSIGNANT, *oppida condunt.*
Hor. Epist. lib. ii. ep. 1.

When you have considered all these particulars, to which I might have added a multitude of others, but that I would not exhaust your patience, you will despise the suggestion, that an affection to Greek and Roman literature has a necessary tendency to lessen the belief of divine revelation. They are but very superficial scholars, who think there are no evidences of Christianity in those writers of antiquity, whom, for their eminence, we call *classical*. This is indeed so far from being the case, that there is scarcely a doctrine of the Scriptures which they have not preserved, nor a miracle which they have not imitated, and transferred to themselves, in some form or other; insomuch, that Celsus, one of the earliest writers against Christianity, most impudently pretended, that the books of Moses were compiled from the miracles of paganism. He might have said with equal truth, that the two tables of the Ten Commandments were borrowed from the Laws of Solon; whereas, it is certain, on the contrary, that there were no written laws among the heathens till more than a thousand years after the law of Moses; and that the laws of the Twelve Tables among the Romans, and other heathen laws of the first antiquity, were evidently borrowed from the laws of the Jews; as Josephus proves admirably well, in his discourse against Appion. Any person may see this who will read over attentively the laws of the Twelve Tables, as they are given in page 315 of the first volume of Mr. Hook's Roman History.

LETTER XVI.

ON HORACE'S LOVE OF SOLITUDE.

When the course of our study carries us to the Epistles of Horace, I generally meet with some particular passage in every lesson which engages my attention, and fixes itself upon my mind, either on account of the elegance of the expression, or the value of the sentiment. In the epistle of yesterday he spoke of his country-seat as a situation which *restored him to himself;* his meaning is, that in this place of solitude and retirement, he could follow his meditations, and be happy in *his own company;* which was not the case with him when at Rome;

Villice, sylvarum et mihi me reddentis agelli.

Can any thing be more characteristic of a scholar and a man of genius than these few words? There never was a good, or a wise, or an ingenious man, who did not frequently wish to be thus put in possession of himself, in some scene of peace and quietness. In the life of a city, amidst the variety of impertinent objects, and the hurry of company, a thoughtful mind is withdrawn from itself, and under continual interruption. It is common for a man to lose his companion in a croud, and it is not uncommon for him to lose himself in the same way. When the mind is daily conversing with others, it has no opportunity of conversing with itself: these two employments differ, as the gentle murmuring of the solitary brook differs from the noise

and agitation of a gale at sea. It is always a sign that the mind has some good in it, when it grows fond of retirement. The foolish and thoughtless part of mankind fly daily to others, because they have nothing entertaining in themselves: they have no interest in the subjects of religion or science of any kind, no imagery of their own to dwell upon; whence it happens, that they are never so effectually lost as when they find themselves. Wise men have little entertainment in company, because what is called company, and that even good company, is so often composed of the ignorant, the illiterate, the vain, and the thoughtless, who have all fled from themselves to find one another.

If you would apply this sentiment of Horace to yourself, let it teach you, while you are young, to lay in the seeds of instruction and learning; that hereafter you may have a furnished mind to look in upon, and may find more than you lose when you go out of company. Thus you will know a pleasure by experience, which never can be known from any description of it; that of feasting upon mental matter; of pursuing truth without interruption; and of expanding and perfecting the ideas that have been laid up in the memory. This pleasure has been known and spoken of with rapture and enthusiasm in all ages by philosophers, poets, orators, and divines: and he is a miserable empty being, who dies without understanding it. Few men have ever been fit to be in the world, who did not love better to find themselves out of it.

LETTER XVII.

ON THE EFFECT OF LEARNING UPON THE MANNERS.

Two lines of Ovid are quoted in Lilly's Syntaxis, which deserve the attention of every scholar,

Adde quod ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

There is in most tempers a natural ferocity which wants to be softened; and the study of liberal arts and sciences will generally have this happy effect in polishing the manners. When the mind is daily attentive to useful learning, a man is detached from his passions, and taken as it were out of himself; and the habit of being so abstracted makes the mind more manageable, because the passions are out of practice. Besides, the arts of learning are the arts of peace, and furnish no encouragements to an hostile disposition.

There is a dreadful mistake too current among young people, and which their own inexperience is apt to cherish and commend in one another, that a boy is of no consequence, and makes no figure, unless he is quarrelsome, and renders himself a terror to his companions. They call this honour and spirit: but it is false honour, and an evil spirit; it does not command any respect, but begets hatred and aversion; and as it cannot well consist with the purposes of society, it leads a person into a sort of solitude, like that of the wild beast in the desert, who must spend his time by himself, because he is not fit for company.

If any difference arises, it should be conducted with reason and moderation: scholars should contend with wit and argument, which are the weapons proper to their profession. Their science is a science of defence; it is like that of fencing with the foil, which has a guard or button upon the point, that no offence may be given: when the sword is taken up instead of the foil, fencing is no longer an exercise of the school, but of the field. If a gentleman with a foil in his hand appears heated, and in a passion with his adversary, he exposes himself by acting out of character; because this is a trial of art and not of passion.

The reason why people are soon offended, is only this, that they set too high a value upon themselves: a slight reflection can never be a great offence, but when it is offered to a great person; and if a man is such in his own opinion, he will measure an offence, as he measures himself, far beyond its value.

If we consult our religion upon this subject, it teaches us, that no man is to value himself for any qualifications of mind or body; that he has numberless sins for which he ought to humble himself daily in the sight of God; and that it is his duty to think all others better than himself. If God humbled himself to exalt us, true greatness must consist in abasing ourselves, and giving honour to our company. What we call complaisance, gentility, or good breeding, affects to do this; and is the imitation of a most excellent virtue. If we obtain the good opinion of men by the shadow of a virtue, the reality will entitle us to the praise of God, which is the only true and lasting honour.

LETTER XVIII.

ON TRUE AND FALSE HONOUR.

You wonder I should speak against honour, when it is the principle upon which every gentleman ought to act. I grant it; but there are two sorts of honour; the one genuine, the other spurious; the one is the honour of wise men, the other of fools. Honour, in its best sense, is the regard which a virtuous man hath to the preservation of his character: it is, properly speaking, the modesty of the mind, or moral modesty, which is shocked with the imputation of an unworthy action. But then you will observe, that the person who pretends to be a man of honour, must first be well informed concerning the nature of good and evil; without which he may be shocked at any appearance of goodness in himself, and glory in his shame; which is a very common case. False honour may always be distinguished by these two marks; first, that it is a very irritable principle; and secondly, that it makes the opinion or fashion of the world the only rule of its conduct. The honour which preserves a man is good; the honour which inflames him is bad; and if he has no rule, but the custom of his company, whereby to judge of good and evil, his company may be very bad, and very much mistaken, and then he will be led into great absurdities, and act more like a madman than a gentleman. According to this idea of honour, a man hates what his company hates; and thus it happens, that we find a sort of honour among

thieves and pick-pockets, who, like other societies, are a rule to one another.

Without these necessary distinctions, that sense of honour, which you take to be the security of your character, will endanger the loss of it: because you will be tempted either to mean or rash actions, for fear of losing the esteem of those whose judgment is of no value.

Suppose a man, whose birth and fortune put him amongst gentlemen, is a scandalous and notorious liar. When such a person is charged with his fault before company, he ought to confess and repent of it, by all the laws of conscience, virtue, and religion. But what saith honour? It bids him persist in the denial of his guilt, and murder his accuser, if it is in his power; when the voice of reason and justice would have thanked him for the admonition.

First, a man tells a lie, to defame the character of another; then he tells a second by denying the first; then he fights in defence of his denial: and the vulgar notion of honour not only acquits him, but obliges him to it. Between this honour and the frantic fury of actual madness, there is no difference but in the name: if there is any difference, it is only this, that honour acts deliberately upon principle, and madness raves by accident and misfortune. The devil would be better pleased if the world were full of such honour; but God and all good men must detest it, as one of the greatest plagues that ever prevailed upon earth.

LETTER XIX.

ON LITERARY COMPOSITION.

Composition is not only a difficult task, but is indeed a miserable drudgery, when you have neither rules to direct you, nor matter to work upon; which is the case with many poor boys, who are obliged to squeeze out of their brains an exercise against the time appointed.

To store the mind with good matter, you must accustom yourself to the reading of good authors, such as historians, poets, orators, philosophers, and controversialists; the last are particularly to be studied for the well managing of an argument. The political and theological controversialists are best; but they seldom fall in the way of the younger sort of readers.

When you are to write upon any subject, the best way of entering upon it, is to set down what your own mind furnishes, and say all you can, before you descend to consult books and read upon it: for if you apply to books before you have laid your plan, your own thoughts will be dissipated, and you will dwindle from a composer to a transcriber.

In thinking upon a subject you are to consider, that every proposition is an answer to some question: so that if you can answer all the questions that can be put to you concerning it, you have a thorough understanding of it: and in order to compose, you have nothing to do but to ask yourself those questions; by which you will raise from your mind the latent matter,

and having once got it, you may dispose of it and put it into form afterwards.

Suppose the discovery of America by Columbus were proposed; you might put these questions upon it: How came he to think of such an expedition? What evidence had he to proceed upon? Did the ancients believe any thing that might lead him to such a discovery? What steps did he take in the affair? How was his opinion received? What happened to him in the attempt? How did it succeed? How was he rewarded afterwards? What were the consequences of this discovery to the old world, and what farther consequences may still be expected? When you have given a circumstantial answer to all these questions, you will have composed a methodical history of *the discovery of America.*

By this way of asking questions, a subject is drawn out, so that you may view it in all its parts, and treat of it with little difficulty, provided you have acquired a competent knowledge of it by reading or discoursing about it in time past: if not, *ex nihilo nil fit;* where no water is in the well, you may pump for ever without effect.

Subjects are either single or compounded; in other words, they are either simple or complex. A single subject consists of one notion or idea, which is to be pursued in all its branches. A compound subject is a proposition, in which some one thing is affirmed of another. These two are to be treated after different methods.

If your subject is simple, you may examine it under all the following heads, which are called *common places:* as, 1st, Its relation to the senses, affections, understandings, interests, and expressions of men. 2nd, Its several kinds; which are to be described and

distinguished. 3d, Its causes or principles. 4th, The effects produced by it, with the ends of good or evil which it does or should aim at. 5th, Its relation to place; which comprehends the state of it in different places, or the places which have been distinguished by it. 6th, Its relation to time; which will include the different state of your subject in different ages.

Thus, for example; suppose the subject to be treated of is *war*. 1st, It is the scourge of God upon the corruptions of mankind; and being so reputed is never to be undertaken wantonly and unadvisedly: but as things now are, it is in many cases unavoidable; so that every nation should be prepared by having their youth trained to arms and to all manly exercises, avoiding luxury and effeminacy, by which every nation is weakened and rendered insufficient for its own defence.

2d, There are several kinds of war; offensive, and defensive; a land war and a naval war; an invasion of one's own country by a foreign enemy; but the worst of all is a civil war, in which the people turn their arms against one another, and so make themselves a prey to foreign enemies.

3d, The causes of war are the encroachments and insults of some neighbouring kingdom; a want of due authority and subordination at home; the oppression of one part of a nation by another part; improper concessions, which encourage insolence; treaties ill advised or not sufficiently explicit, and a want of good faith and honour in observing them.

4th, The end to be obtained by every war is peace, which is often never to be obtained by lighter methods. But too frequently the ambition of princes tempts them to make war for the vanity of conquest, or to extend their dominions, or to take revenge upon an old enemy

that has unfortunately given some advantage. In some cases an invasion has the good effect of rousing a nation sunk in pleasure and dissipation; it brings them to their senses, and restores them by proper exercise to a military state.

5th, Its relation to place will give occasion to recount the most memorable wars that have been carried on in different parts of the world, and the places that have been rendered famous in history by battles, and sieges, and victories; such as the wars of Cæsar in Gaul; the battles of Cannæ and Pharsalia; the sacking of Rome by Brennus; the victory of the Christians over the Turks at Lepanto; the conquest of Mexico, and the West Indies, &c.

6th, Its relation to time will bring in the changes that have taken place in the art of war, the different modes of fighting when the Macedonian phalanx and Roman legion were thought impregnable, from the present way of determining a battle by *fire arms*, and heavy artillery, which have made defensive armour useless. The difference also may be shewn, so far as it is understood, between the Roman gallies and a British man of war.

Thus you see, that, by pursuing one simple idea under the several common places above mentioned, we are led through the whole subject, and may soon throw together so many hints, that it would require a folio volume to handle them all distinctly. But here let me admonish you, that it requires more skill, and learning, and judgment to contract a subject than to expand it; and he is the best composer who knows how to prune away all superfluous matter.

If your subject is compound, or made up of more notions than one, it forms a *proposition*, in which some one thing is predicated (as the logicians speak) of

another; as, *war is evil; old wine is better than new; old friends are better than new; old music is better than new; old divinity is better than new;* and such like. Here you have a matter *proposed,* which it is your business to *prove* and *illustrate.* In this case, your best method is,

1st, To open and explain the sense of your proposition, and distinguish your subjects, if necessary, from other subjects allied to it.

2d, To give a reason or two, to prove the truth of the proposition.

3d, To confirm your reasons by some observation on men and manners, some proverbial sentence expressing the public judgment of mankind upon the case, or some sentiment from an author of established reputation.

4th, To illustrate your subject with a simile, which is no other than some parallel case in nature; and this you are to apply to the different parts of your subject, if it is so apposite as to admit of such an accommodation.

5th, To add an example either from ancient or modern history, or from your own experience.

6th, Then, lastly, you are to sum up your matter, and shew the practical use of it; concluding with some pertinent exhortation.

This is the easiest way of treating a subject, and the most effectual. When I was taught to make a theme at school, we had a model of a theme of this construction composed by Mr. Dryden, which was the pattern we were obliged to follow; and I wish I could give you a copy of it. *Method* is the *light* of a subject, and *expression* is the *life* of it: and, in my judgment, an *immethodical* piece is worse than an *ill-written* one. The art is, to use method as builders do

a scaffold, which is to be taken away when the work is finished: or, as good workmen, who conceal the *joints* in their work, so that it may look smooth and pleasant to the eye, as if it were all made of one piece.

Cicero, in his Orations, speaking generally as a lawyer, pleads for the lawfulness of some fact, or against its unlawfulness. He begins with preparing his hearers for the subject; either winning their attention by a modest approach, or shewing them how they are interested in what he has to propose to them.

In the next place, he proceeds to state the case, and lays the facts before them, with all their circumstances; or such at least as make for his purpose. This is called the *narration*.

Then he descends to *reason* upon the case; either justifying his client, or refuting the arguments on the other side. The justification and the refutation generally make two separate articles. If his speech is of the accusatory kind, his method is still the same, *mutatis mutandis*.

After all, he sums up the merit in a conclusion, which is called *peroratio*, because it reviews the several parts of the whole oration, and presses the audience with the force of the evidence, that their judgment may go with his side of the question.

Many sermons in the English language are some of the finest orations in the world. They are of different sorts; some are *moral*, some *controversial*, and some *expository:* the latter are of more general use, because they take in the two other divisions of moral and controversial, as occasion requires.

Under the first head of a discourse, the subject is opened with some general observations, and distinguished.

Under the second, it is explained and illustrated.

Under the third, the uses are shown, and the inferences deduced, as they follow naturally from the most interesting parts of the exposition.

A sermon written after this, or some like method, will be clearly understood and easily remembered. Besides, when a thought stands in its right place, it has ten times more force than when it is improperly connected. Compositions are like machines, where one part depends upon another; if any part gets out of place, the motion is disordered, and the whole is of less effect. A rhapsody of miscellaneous thoughts, huddled together in the way of an unconnected essay, with no particular relation to the text, either makes no impression at the time when it is delivered, or leaves no instruction behind it. Not every musician, who can make a noise, and shew a slight of hand upon an instrument, is fit for a composer of music; neither is every man who can *think* with freedom able to *write* with good effect.

The three different sorts of composition in prose, are the narration, the epistle, and the speech. Narration should consist of long and clear periods, descriptive of facts, with reflections sparingly intermixt. The epistle is distinguished by short sentences and an easy unaffected manner. Method is here of no great value. Speeches are different from both, consisting of reasonings, apologies, defences, accusations, refutations, and such like, enforced and ornamented as much as may be with the figures of rhetoric properly introduced: of which I shall endeavour to give you an explanation at some other opportunity.

LETTER XX.

TO A YOUNG GENTLEMAN GOING INTO THE ARMY.

What figure can you make in any state of life, unless you adopt some certain rules for the regulation of your conduct? Wisdom lives by rule, and folly lives by chance; and this is the chief difference there is betwixt them. Such rules, therefore, as may be useful to you in the profession you are now going to take upon you, I shall give you freely, so far as they are known to me: the success must depend upon your own attention.

Do not imagine then, that because you are going to put on a sword, you may therefore throw aside your books. The army, I know, differs very much from the university, and has many gentlemen, who think they have no great occasion for learning: but be assured of this, that the learned will have the advantage of the ignorant in all the departments of public life. There are times and seasons, when they who know less, be their fortune and station what it will, must come to those who know more; and natural abilities, be they never so great, will always do better with information than without it. I would therefore advise you by all means to keep up your Greek, Latin, and French, and be adding as much as possible to your stock of philosophy and history; the uses of which are too extensive for me to enlarge upon. Some of the best scholars have been the best soldiers; as you know from the examples of Xenophon and Julius Cæsar.

I gave an instance of General Wolfe's literature, and the advantage he derived from it, in another letter. You have read Cæsar's Commentaries familiarly as a school-boy; consider them again as a soldier: and if you have French enough, as I hope you have, you will find the French Polybius, with Folard's Commentaries, an excellent work for teaching the art of war. But the best elementary treatise is that of *Vegetius*, whose *Military Institutions* comprehend the discipline of the Roman armies and the œconomy of their generals. His work is addressed to the emperor *Valentinian;* but his matter is collected from more ancient writers. It has been very well translated of late years into English. I wish every young officer in the army were as fond of this book, and as well acquainted with it, as I am.

As there are many different principles espoused in this country; some of them very dangerous to the commonwealth; you are to remember, that the grand object to a soldier is the just right of his king and country; and that if he loses his life in the pursuit of that object, he dies in a good cause. In all your sentiments be true to the side of government and authority. Practice will soon show you the absolute necessity of obedience in an army; and it is as necessary to the welfare of the state. When the power of government declines, and the reverence due to authority no longer prevails among the people, a nation is in the condition of a lunatic, who has lost his reason, the governing principle: and as you read of a certain dæmoniac, that he was *crying and cutting himself with stones;* just so is it with the country that is falling into anarchy: nothing is to be heard but the outcries and yellings of faction; and the hands of the people are turned against the people, to grind, and torment,

and destroy themselves. We are now a distressed country: our wants are great, and our resources not improving; our enemies are many, and our friends are few: and yet it is my sincere opinion, that the worst evils the land suffers, or will suffer, are from itself; and for these there can be no remedy, till better principles shall take place amongst us, and public spirit, which is now dead, shall revive again.

That you may be able, in body as well as mind, to go through the duties of your profession, you must also remember, that the first qualification necessary in a soldier, is to *endure hardness;* and he that would suffer least by hard accidents and trying occasions, will find it his wisdom as well as his duty to keep himself in continual practice. The common men, who must endure many and great hardships, are never so well reconciled to them as when they see that their officer does not spare himself; who will thus secure their respect and win upon their affections; and then there will be a mutual confidence in the time of danger.

Charles the XIIth of Sweden quieted a mutiny that was beginning in his army by eating some bread that was mouldy, without making a wry face at it. He owned it was not *very good,* but proved that it *might be eaten,* by his own example; and then his soldiers had nothing more to say.

The great point with all persons in office, is to act with temper and steadiness; to show that they are not influenced by pride and ill-nature, but only by a sense of duty. When a man seems to think of himself more than of his business, his authority either loses ground or becomes odious. All this may be attended to by an officer, without incurring the suspicion of meanness or weakness: it will, on the contrary, demonstrate a

firmness of mind, and shew that he is fit to command others who can thus command himself.

Drunkenness is a vice so much below a gentleman, that I hope you will want but little advice on that head. Every school-boy that makes a theme will be able to tell you why soldiers ought to be sober. He that is in liquor has lost his strength, and will easily be worsted by an antagonist of inferior ability. When drink takes away reason, a man is off his guard, and becomes a traitor against himself: he is like one who has permitted the enemy to shoot his centinel. History will inform you how armies have fallen a prey when they were besotted with liquor; and there have been instances, when a subtle enemy has drawn an army into their own ruin by some stratagem for intoxicating them; as we kill vermin by baiting a trap.

In your dress, be neither slovenly nor fanciful. Slovenliness in the person generally denotes some defect in the mind and understanding: and as to foppishness, it is a sad mistake, when he who should be a soldier, forgets that he is a man.

With regard to your behaviour in company, (which will now be of a new sort) the best general rule I can give, and which I would advise you to carry with you every where, is, not to talk too much nor too fast: for the one will be apt to make you troublesome, and the other may bring you into danger: a youth of too many words will let his tongue outrun his wit; and when he pushes on too hastily, he will fall into some embarrassment with his company, where he may neither know how to proceed with safety, nor retreat with dignity. Recommend yourself, if you possibly can, to some old respectable officer of your corps, who may admonish you with the freedom of a friend and the authority of a father, if you should be guilty of any

little mistakes at first, from accidental levity or inexperience. Here my subject brings the practice of duelling into sight, a practice too horrible to be reformed by the pen. No Roman ever thought of this foolish expedient for determining a private dispute: they made it a principle to reserve their swords to be turned against the enemies of their country; and you have a pleasant example of this in the story of Pulsio and Varenus, two of Cæsar's centurions in Gaul, who had always been quarrelling, and yet never dreamed of drawing their swords upon one another. They leaped from the ramparts, to shew which was the best man in a dispute with a croud of enemies; and so it happened, that they both retreated with equal honour; each having had the opportunity of saving the other's life. The practice of aiming at the life of a fellow-soldier for an insignificant affront, arose from the savage custom of *trial by battle*, which the law anciently allowed, though wise and good men always detested and remonstrated against it as a disgrace to a Christian country. Till the authority of government shall effectually interpose, it is as vain to think of writing against duels, as it would be to throw an ink-bottle at a water-spout, which can be dispersed only by the shock of a cannon. To you in particular I shall observe, that though your father might be ready to resign you in the way of your duty, and for the good of your country; it would probably break his heart if you were to fall in a private dispute: and if you should ever be the unhappy instrument of sending some thoughtless companion out of life, it might break your own heart.

Upon the whole, there is certainly nothing like a proper mixture of religion in a military character, to keep a man within the lines of prudence and safety.

And soldiers may have religion as well as other men; why else did the Providence of God select Cornelius the centurion as the first gentile convert to the Gospel? Devotion never appears with more dignity than in a person whose profession places him above the imputation of a superstitious fear. I was never more pleased with any spectacle that occurred to me abroad, than when I saw many venerable grey-headed soldiers, the relics of battles and sieges, in the great hospital of the invalids at Paris, dispersed about different quarters of their chapel, and all engaged in their own private devotions at a common hour of the day. If it were required to add the greatest possible dignity to a soldier already qualified in other respects, I would put this motto upon him, "Je crains Dieu, et je n'ai point d'autre crainte," *I fear God, and I have no other fear.*

LETTER XXI.

ON THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION.

Though I take this serious subject, I shall write neither a sermon nor a lecture to you. Your own experience will bear witness to the truth of a fact which has often surprised and confounded me. Nothing demonstrates an inborn depravity in human nature so much, as that dread which most young people are under lest they should be thought to say their prayers, or, what would be worst of all, discovered in the act; though prayer to God is a duty as ho-

nourable in itself as it is necessary to man. Gratitude demands that we should daily return something to the Power from whom we receive all things, as life, health, strength, reason, and the capacity of enjoyment: and gratitude is a virtue which all men honour. Prudence requires that we should keep up an interest with Him from whom we expect every thing in the time that is to come; and prudence is commendable in all. It is an honour to man that he is permitted, much more that he is invited, to address himself to his Maker. We are all desirous of being seen in the company of our betters, and speaking to them; and as God is the source of all perfection, infinite in goodness as well as greatness, where can be the harm of having it known that we are sometimes alone in his company? Every passion of the heart, and every power of the understanding, hope, fear, love, gratitude, admiration, reason, memory, judgment, all call upon us to keep up this intercourse; and yet we are ashamed of it!

I would dissect this shame if I could, and discover the causes of the distemper; but it is easier to say what it is not, than what it is. It cannot proceed from ignorance; for there is scarcely one boy in a hundred, of fifteen years of age, who does not already know nearly as much as I have here been telling him. It cannot proceed from modesty or bashfulness; because the same boy who is ashamed to say his prayers before one companion, will have the boldness to swear and talk nonsense before twenty. If it should be pleaded, that the appearance of hypocrisy is avoided, then it is to be feared the duty would be practised in hypocrisy: and what an opinion must he have of his own character, who has reason to think that the fact of prayer in him must be taken for an act of dissimulation? If he thinks he is not good

enough to pray to God to make him better, he must then suppose himself to be past grace, and given over to a reprobate mind, which is a dreadful prospect.

Whatever the general reason of it may be, the fact is as I say. When the eye of one boy is upon another, it has a fascinating power, like that of a rattle-snake, to deter him from the practice of devotion: and few indeed have resolution enough to assert their right of approaching their Maker, and shewing that they were born of Christian parents. And what is this fiery trial that is so terrifying? What is it but the sneer of an idle companion, of no more force nor authority than the squalling of an infant? Yet such is the servility of the human mind, on some occasions, that the apprehension of this has more weight than all the terrors our religion has suggested to us; that is, than all the threatenings of provoked Omnipotence. If nature in youth were as it should be, it would be actuated on all occasions, especially on this the greatest of all, by a principle of generosity; and then one boy would encourage another to the practice of that duty, without which he can never expect to succeed in this world or the other. I knew one young gentleman who had given his worthy father a promise, that he would never, upon any consideration, omit to read over some one chapter of the Bible before he went to bed: and I have reason to think he kept his word faithfully, without failing in several years, though the hour might be sometimes a little unseasonable. He is now risen to be one of the first characters in the state; and has done service to his country in almost every department of it.

In turning this matter over a little farther in my thoughts, it occurs to me, that none of the passions have so quick a feeling, and will bear touching so little, as pride; and that pride is always applied to,

for the exciting of those vain terrors which get the better of devotion. "Why," says one, "you won't do so? They'll laugh at you." The power of this shallow artifice over the mind is inexpressible. The courage is blasted; and even common sense is put to flight: for what becomes of his wit, who hazards the loss of all things, and chooses to be really dishonourable, lest he should be apparently ridiculous?

From the whole case this reflection arises, that no man can be a Christian, and perform his duty to God, until he can bear to be laughed at. This is the first victory the mind is to obtain over the world: and till it is obtained, no good can possibly be done. Yet in some natures the struggle will be very sharp; and I make no doubt but that there are many young gentlemen in the army, to whom it would be less trouble to face a cannon, than to stand the effect of a grin from a silly companion on a principle of devotion.

A popular preacher began his discourse with observing, that "Prayer is a natural duty:" and thus far the observation might be true, that the duty of prayer may be inferred and inforced on the principles of what we call natural reason: but whether the practice is natural to man, let any person judge when he has weighed the following fact, which was well remarked by the author of the *Adventurer*, that beggars in the middle of the winter will sit freezing upon the stone steps at a church-door all the time of divine service, rather than take shelter within it on the disagreeable conditions of joining in the devotions of the place. If he has an opportunity, let him also mark the behaviour of the boys of a public school, when they are altogether at the church; and then let him determine whether prayer, in a practical sense, is a *natural duty*.

LETTER XXII.

ON PARTIES.

You hear much of parties, and you complain that you can learn very little about their principles, though they have so much to say against one another. The pretensions of different parties are frequently brought into question in a great assembly, where you may possibly have a personal concern hereafter in the business of your country; and therefore you are certainly right in desiring to understand what they are. Some, you say, are called whigs, some tories; some affect to be neutral, declaring against all parties, and saying that men differ with one another only about words and names. Some say, whigs out of place are tories; and tories in place are whigs: which is to say, that there is no principle amongst us but that of self-interest; and thus you are left in total darkness as to the proper differences in opinion by which parties are guided.

The terms *whig* and *tory* are nick-names, with which the two parties of republicans and loyalists pelted one another, with great animosity, in the reign of *Charles* the Second: and are scarcely worth an explanation. To cut the matter as short as I can, and give you a general idea of their different views in a short compass, I must tell you, that these two parties take different sides in the great question concerning the *origin of civil government.* Some say, government is of God; by which it is meant, that his authority, in a certain sense, must take place in civil society, for its order and support; as his power prevails in the constitution of nature: and they say,

there are difficulties in the subject, which can never be got over on any other supposition. Others say, that government is a human institution, and that all the power by which governors act is derived from those who are governed; as if you should say, that the captain of the ship has his commission from the crew.

They who espouse this latter opinion, have endeavoured to clear the way to it by laying down four other very extraordinary propositions; which are these following.

First, that there was a time when there was no society amongst men, but they wandered about in a state of savage equality, as companions to the beasts; such as the poet describes them:

Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris
Mutum et turpe pecus——

Hor. Sat. i. 3.

Secondly, that by some one wiser than the rest they were collected by degrees into society, and began to form a political body.

Thirdly, that when men could not be kept to their duty, they began to enact laws to keep them in order.

Fourthly, that when it was found by experience, that laws might be evaded by offences committed without witnesses, they endeavoured to work a persuasion in men's minds, that there was an invisible being, who could see into men's hearts, and would punish offences in another life; and thus the exigences of society would lead naturally to the *invention* of religion.

Not one of these propositions can be proved by any evidence of reason or history. As to the first of

them, if ever there was a time when men were savage, those men were in a state of degeneracy, and had *lost* the benefits of society.

As to the second, men were not originally collected into society, because they are in it by nature; inasmuch as all larger societies must have subsisted at first in single families, which would increase naturally into more extensive communities. To prevent that state of equality which is merely ideal, and never existed any where upon earth, a man and his wife, who are the rudiments of all larger society, were brought together with unequal powers; the wife being the weaker by nature, and subject to the husband; and the children, who follow the condition of the mother, are subject to the same authority. A learned and useful author, with whom you are acquainted, to avoid the force of this argument, is driven to the necessity of supposing that the wife hath an authority over the husband as the husband hath over the wife: but the contrary is self-evident; and therefore government arises of course from the condition of human nature; it is a necessary consequence of that natural law by which mankind is multiplied. The father of the family is the natural ruler of it; and none can be so absurd as to suppose, that the father derives his power from the children who are begotten of him: *that* power is the gift of his Maker, and follows by necessity from the order of nature.

You will find a great advantage, and avoid infinite confusion, by thus considering government in its actual rudiments. For all great things are best understood by considering them under their smallest forms—*maxima e minimis:* and till you can find some way of reducing complicated cases to simple ideas, you will scarcely be able to understand any thing clearly.

As to the third proposition, that laws were prior to religion, it is contrary to reason, and to all positive testimony. It is contrary to reason, because the obligation of religion is greater than that of law, extending to all cases, as well secret as open. It therefore supersedes the use of laws, which are made only *for the ungodly;* for people who either have no religion, or wilfully transgress what they have. Religion therefore is prior, as the more compendious and powerful obligation.

The proposition is also contrary to positive testimony: because even heathens allow that religion was before law. We read of religion, and of religious institutions, in Homer; and that kings have their power, honour, and support from God: but we read of no laws then in being: the term is not used in *Homer's* writings. The words of *Justin* are remarkable—*Populus nullis legibus tenebatur: arbitria principum pro legibus erant*;* and I look upon this fact as a collateral proof, that all government subsisted at first in families, and increased from domestic into national: for who but a father can want no more law than that of natural affection for the government of his household and descendants? And what subjects but children either would or could submit by choice to be governed by the will of another? So far as laws look upwards, they were made first in popular states, to bind those governors who had no natural affection for those who were subject to them. People who think they have nothing to expect either from the principles or the affections of their rulers, will be upon their defence, and bind them as fast as they can: though mutual suspicion is productivè of evils

* Justin, lib. i. cap. 1.

too many to be enumerated. You may have a view of them, if you read a discourse by *Swift* (one of the best he ever wrote) on the *contests and dissensions in Athens and Rome:* it will shew you what is meant by a *balance of power*—that the many may be *tyrants* as well as a single person—how mercenary orators have inflamed the people to their own ruin—how popular jealousies and tumults have led naturally to arbitrary power, &c.

Then, fourthly, that religion arose from the exigences of society, and was a political invention, brought in aid to the inefficacy of laws, it is the falsest of all. For the proof of a God was in the works of the creation, prior to all law, and therefore could never arise from political necessity. Even to this day we find a sense of religion, such as it is, and some regard to the obligations of it, in those nations who have neither laws nor writing amongst them.

This system of policy, to which some great names have given a sanction, is wrong in every step of its reasoning. And here I must observe besides, that there is a case of capital consideration, for which it has no provision. Every government must exercise a power of life and death; a power which no government can derive from human authority, because no man has a power over his own life, and cannot be said to give to another, what he hath not in himself. So that this power can be derived only from God; who being the author of man's life, has a right to dispose of it.

An author who belongs to the class of the *Nouveaux Philosophes,* endeavours to solve this difficulty on his own principles, in an *Essay on Crimes and Punishments.* He seems well inclined to give to every man the disposal of his own life, by his calling self-mur-

der a *voluntary migration*, as when a man leaves his parish, or goes off as a member of some new colony. But if this should be insufficient, he argues farther, that although the power of life and death is not in any individual taken separately, yet the aggregate body may have it when they are all taken together; which in effect is the same as to argue, that though one cypher has no value, a great many cyphers together will make a sum.

You will find this power of the multitude a notion big with absurdity, and which can never be reduced to practice, because it implies a contradiction. You must suppose that the whole aggregate of the people are unanimous, who never yet united in any one act since the beginning of the world. If they are divided, then their power is the power of the people over the people; it is the power of Peter over John, and of John over Peter; and can never be settled, till one of them has either destroyed the other, or deprived him of his liberty.

Thus I have sketched out for you the ground of dispute between the two parties who have made most noise in the kingdom. I shall neither trace the effects of their different principles, nor give you any reflections upon their characters, as that would carry me out too far, and be an invidious undertaking. So far as we have now gone, it is the part of every good subject to go, who has capacity and opportunity. It happens that the *origin of civil government* is a subject which of late has been incomparably treated in a learned and elegant discourse by my excellent friend Dr. *Horne*, president of *Magdalen College* in *Oxford**

* See Discourses on several Subjects and Occasions, vol. ii. disc. 12.

(now dean of *Canterbury*), to which I must refer you for farther information. There you will find every thing that learning and moderation can pertinently introduce, or at least, that need be said, for the settling of the question. It will give you satisfaction in point of argument; and the composition, while it instructs you in your duty, will improve your English.

LETTER XXIII.

ON THE CHARACTER OF VOLTAIRE.

If a wicked writer is not a witty one, he will do but little mischief; for poison is never swallowed, as such, but in a fit of despair. Wit may conspire with truth to give us pleasure; as wholesome wine may be brought to table in the richest vessel: but wit, when possessed by men of bad principles, recommends falsehood, as poison is offered to us in a gilded cup:

> ——*Nulla aconita bibuntur*
> *Fictilibus. Tunc illa time, cùm pocula sumes*
> *Gemmata, et lato setinum ardebit in auro.*
>
> Juv. Sat. 10.

Truth in literature is the same thing with honesty in common life. You may admire an ingenious man: but you would wish always to be concerned with an honest one: indeed no man can be safe in any other company. If a great genius is dishonest, his ingenuity

only renders him the more dangerous: and it is to no purpose to tell us that he is a man of parts; because none but a man of parts can corrupt the public with much success. No sharper, properly so called, can possibly be a fool. He that lives by his wits, must have some wits to live by: and every sharper, in proportion as he is more artful and insinuating in company, is so much the worse man. We should think it a very senseless apology for a highwayman or a cheat, to say that he is a man of genius. His talents may recommend him to rogues like himself; and they will set him at their head for his accomplishments: but his eminence in his profession will be no recommendation with honest people; who if they fall into his company, have nothing to do but to look to their pockets.

In this light I have been used to consider the celebrated Mr. Voltaire. I am pleased with a man of wit; and I admire a scholar, wherever I find him: but, at the same time, I abhor a cheat: and if he that robs a man of his money, and hinders the success of his neighbours, is detestable in society; he that would rob us of the truth, or render us unfit to receive it, is a worse character. If it is his first wish to deprive us of that truth which relates to our interests in another life; then he differs from an evil spirit in nothing but the inferiority of his abilities.

If Mr. Voltaire should be recommended to you by any of his friends and admirers; or any of his seducing publications should fall in your way (which some Englishmen have been very forward to translate), it is proper you should know what you are to expect, that you may be prepared against the ill effects of them; and possibly you may have some opportunity of rescuing others from the snares of his sophistry.

I lately met with two volumes of a work in French,

intitled *Les Erreurs de Voltaire.* They are written by the Abbé Nonnette, a moderate and candid writer, whose remarks have gone through many editions at Paris; and I wish they were translated into English. In a preliminary discourse to the work, he has drawn the literary character of Voltaire with great calmness and judgment; allowing him all the merit he could justly claim, and distinguishing properly between his excellencies and his errors. From this preliminary discourse I shall give you a pretty large extract in another letter.

LETTER XXIV.

ON THE SAME.

Though I could indulge myself with a quire of criticism on Mr. Voltaire, I rather choose to give you something at present in the more humble character of a translator; and if it does not run off so smoothly as an original composition might do, that you must excuse. We take, or seem to take, the sentiments of another with more impartiality than we advance our own; and in the present case, I apprehend you will suffer nothing by the exchange.

"Perhaps it would be difficult," says the Abbé Nonnette, "to find, in any age, a man of such great abilities and extensive knowledge as Mr. Voltaire. I think there never was his parallel. He was ignorant

of no kind of literature: he wrote upon every thing: and though he may have fallen short of perfection in some of his productions, yet there is a variety of fancy which always discovers a superiority of genius. At the time of life when other young men are obliged to receive lectures from those who are wiser than themselves, he published those poetical essays which soon made him known all over France. From the pieces he wrote for the theatre, it was the general opinion, that under the reign of Lewis XV. there was no occasion to lament the loss of those great writers, Corneille and Racine, whose productions had done so much honour to the reign of Lewis XIV.

"His works are distinguished by that brilliancy of wit, that fire and elegance of expression, which is not to be acquired by the most intense application: it is the effort of genius, and the gift of nature. After a few years, when his judgment was more mature, he ventured upon philosophy, and treated of it as if he had been nothing but a philosopher; while his poetry would have tempted one to believe he had studied nothing but poetry all his life. But his thoughts were not confined to these: he studied history and criticism; and made observations on the manners and principles of mankind. He attempted every thing, and his genius carried him through; and notwithstanding numberless small errors, one may everywhere trace the genius of Voltaire.

"A knowledge of books, too extensive to have been properly digested, with an indefatigable ardour of mind, and an extraordinary memory, emboldened him to write on all kinds of subjects. A descriptive imagination gave that force to his style, which made ample amends for the want of some lesser graces. The energy of his expressions, his striking contrasts, and

the variety of objects he brings together to set off one another, surprise and engage his readers, even while they disbelieve what they are reading. This is what we are authorised to say of Mr. Voltaire's style.

" For all these talents united, he was regarded as the prodigy of the age in which he lived. He might have been the idol of it; but the frequent abuse of his talents, his extravagant assertions, with that superior tone and dictatorial carriage which he always affected over those who cultivated the sciences and belles lettres, raised him more enemies, censurers, and rivals, than ever he had admirers.

" The human mind has powers with which it can raise itself to the most sublime speculations: but then there are rules to which it must be subservient, and boundaries to which it ought to confine itself. Some wits are equally bold and happy in their attempts; while others are absolutely rash and inconsiderate. It was Mr. Voltaire's misfortune to be too ambitious of exalting himself to the top of every thing, though with the neglect of those good rules and necessary regulations. A judicious reader will therefore immediately discover that the author has no fixed principles; that he has no sound logic; that he is often without true learning; always without discretion and a proper respect to things of the last importance. He will see through all those lively sallies of wit, those bold reflections, and that varnish which is so artfully spread over all his writings. These are ornaments which may dazzle and surprise light and superficial understandings incapable of reflection; but will make very little impression on those who are able to look farther and judge properly.

" Mr. Voltaire is always most extravagant when religion comes in his way; and to this great object we

shall confine ourselves. Religion is that alliance and society which subsists between God and man; a society which brings with it the greatest advantages to mankind, and lays them under the highest obligations: a man truly wise and reasonable finds nothing upon this earth so worthy of his love and veneration. Here all false principles and rash assertions are infinitely dangerous; and they are more particularly so, when they are presented in a form which flatters the pride of the human understanding; when they seem to be the offspring of truth, reason, and even wisdom itself. It is a matter of great concern to detect the falsehood of such principles, and to trace the consequences which follow them; consequences, which at best are ridiculous, and sometimes exceedingly shocking: and, lastly, to learn how to distinguish, in such serious subjects, between truth itself, and that which has only the appearance of it.

"There is scarcely any one piece of Mr. Voltaire in which he has not meddled with religion; and not one in which he has treated it with any respect. He has spoke of it as a poet, an historian, and a philosopher; never as a Christian. Some profane liberties are taken in most of his poetical pieces. His General History is nothing but a satire, in which the bitterness of calumny most commonly takes the place of truth: and in his Philosophical Miscellanies, where he is more of a sceptic than Bayle, he opposes all true principles, and pleads in defence of all errors.

"Yet I must own he never makes a direct attack upon the truth of Christianity: his method is rather to employ all the force of his wit in support of those errors which Christianity condemns. With him the philosophers who are called Materialists are a sort of men void of all prejudices, who only wish to conduct

themselves according to the light of nature. He brings in their arguments; weighs their reasons; admires the force of them; and pronounces them to be unanswerable. Then he gives a pompous list of those famous philosophers who have been Materialists: puts in some of the Fathers of the Church amongst them; and there he leaves his reader.

"All reasonable men must reckon the doctrine of fatality or destiny amongst the worst reveries of philosophy. A blind fate, which draws after it all human events; which leaves nothing to the wisdom and prudence of man; and with which all created beings are but as the springs of a machine; such a sort of destiny is a contemptible absurdity, as inconsistent with reason as with religion. It is impossible that Mr. Voltaire could believe such an absurdity as this, which could only take possession of a stupid Hottentot or blind Mussulman. This, however, is the subject of most of the allegorical pieces in his Miscellanies, and of those reflections which occur so frequently in his General History. A wise man must despise them; a weak man may be ensnared by them; and here the libertine finds an authority for all his extravagances.

"But most dangerous of all, because it is best calculated to seduce people, is his way of treating religious worship, the exercises of piety, the government of the church, and the institutions of its ministry. Here he employs all his wit and satire, his grave arguments and his solemn declamations, to inspire contempt and aversion for every thing of this kind. All that has been written against the Christian or the catholic religion by libertines, and those modern authors who give themselves the pompous name of philosophers, this he industriously quotes; endeavouring to make the wit more pointed, and the ridicule

more outrageous. All those who are devoted to religion, or engaged in the service of it, appear to him as a set of useless mortals, who are either insignificant or vicious. If they have merit, talents, or virtues; if they have done, or now do, any service to the public; he robs them of it all, and conceals it in every picture he has drawn of their characters. But he takes special care that the world shall be perfectly acquainted with all their passions, vices, and follies, by which they have dishonoured themselves and their profession; these are the only things he dwells upon; and from hence he takes occasion to pronounce against them all.

"With Mr. Voltaire, the whole service of religion is nothing but superstition: he excepts nothing, he respects nothing. Sometimes he amuses himself with a picturesque description of the ridiculous mortifications of a *Faquir* or a *Dervise:* but the allusion is always plain enough: a reader may perceive at first sight that he has nothing to do but to change the name, and that the raillery is all pointed against devout Christians. Sometimes, under another allusion, as intelligible as the former, he pretends to shew, that nothing but the folly of superstition can offer sacrifices, vows, and prayers to God for the obtaining of what we want. Because the church does not furnish its altars with opera-girls, and those virtuous heroines who tread the stage, and contribute in more ways than one to the amusement of the public, Mr. Voltaire abuses the whole nation as weak, foolish, and superstitious. In a word, nothing was ever worse contrived, in his opinion, than the ecclesiastical councils, and nothing can be more unreasonable than submission to any of their determinations. He finds that Pagans were always wiser, in leaving all men at liberty to think as

they pleased in matters of religion. Yet in his miscellanies of philosophy and literature, his whole business is to insult religion and all religious people: and his General History was intended for nothing else but to make religion odious: there, with every intemperate sally of licentiousness, and a vain ostentation of a superior taste for philosophy, he empties his quiver against it. The work is a series of calumnies, false accusations, outrageous exaggerations, and artificial concealments, to bring disgrace upon Christianity. Authors, who are either contemptible, or of suspicious characters, if they are but enemies to religion, immediately turn into oracles with Mr. Voltaire. Pagans and Mussulmen are always sure to make their party good against Christians. All that has been invented and propagated by idolatry, heresy, and imposture, against the worshippers of Jesus Christ; all that has been said in defence of tyrants, who were the enemies and persecutors of the church, Mr. Voltaire revives, and reports it as authentic. But whatever he meets with to the advantage of Christians, in authors of established merit and reputation, he either suppresses, or, if he mentions it, it is disguised with such a cloud of criticism, that readers have no chance with him, unless they are aware of his artifices, and well acquainted with the subject beforehand.

"Actuated, as he is, by this spite against the Christian religion, he gives you long details of historical events; and his representations are always unfaithful. All the commotions, and tumults, and disorders, with which the world has been troubled, are laid to the score of Christians; their virtues are travestied into vices; their devotion is all weakness and folly; and their slightest faults are exaggerated into unpardonable crimes.

" But he does not treat Mahometans and Pagans in this manner; these are not the colours in which they are represented. If ever there have been any real virtues among mankind, any wisdom, any reason, any justice, Mr. Voltaire can find it no where but amongst infidels and idolaters: there we must look for all our great men, our great geniuses, and real heroes. If the Protestants are ever so fortunate as to obtain his good word, this never happens but when he sets them in opposition to the Catholics: and if he is obliged to give some testimony to any of the great men we have had amongst us, he takes care to qualify their virtues with their faults, and throws in something in such a fashion as to unsay what he had seemed to allow.

" If any person undertakes to give us a knowledge of men, the laws of history require, that he should describe them as they are, by their good qualities and their defects, their vices and their virtues. To shew us only one side of them, is to be an unfaithful historian. Yet this is Mr. Voltaire's unfair way of writing history: he shews us Christians only by their faults and their vices: Pagans, Mahometans, and heretics, only by their good qualities and great talents.

" We must likewise observe, that this indefatigable zeal to worry the Catholic religion, and defame all those that profess and regard it, does by no means prove that he would be inclined to give better quarter to any other religion. His taste is for nothing but total indifference (which we call Latitudinarianism) and universal toleration. According to him, all true philosophy consists in boasting of universal benevolence; in uttering grand sentiments of probity, justice, and honour; and then for all the rest, to set ourselves above all opinions, doctrines, and articles of faith:

to believe what we please, or to believe nothing at all.

"There is no set of men, of whom he gives us so favourable a character, as of these tolerant philosophers; none whom he presents to us under such an amiable and respectable character. He always describes them as men of a milky sweetness, who breathe nothing but peace and gentleness; who neither condemn, nor blame, nor find fault with any body; men, who leave to all others the liberty of thinking as they please; and who desire nothing, but that all men should shew the same reasonable indulgence toward them, as they shew to others. These good gentlemen demand nothing but liberty to *think;* that is to say (for you must understand them right) they only demand a liberty to insult society, and mock at all religion, with impunity; to propagate all manner of blasphemies that are scandalous and injurious to the Christian faith; and to publish the wildest absurdities, in order to corrupt the opinions and morals of Christian people. And all these demands Mr. Voltaire finds to be very just and reasonable, and endeavours to prove them so in a thousand passages of his writings: especially in his Poem on the Law of Nature, his Discourse on the Soul, and his magnificent Panegyric upon Locke.

"This boldness, which pays no respect to religion, is under as little restraint in regard to the power and authority of kings. This great philosopher is no more fit to teach men to be good subjects than devout Christians. In his works, few rebellions are spoken of, which he does not either approve or palliate. Those maxims which relate to a natural equality amongst men are so equivocal in themselves, and dangerous to government, that they ought never to be treated of

but by men of wisdom and moderation, who can confine themselves within due bounds, and make proper distinctions. Sometimes these maxims are the language of nature and reason; and sometimes they are the cries of popular rage and sedition. Mr. Voltaire treats of them without either precaution or limitation: and there is much more of insidious affectation, than of truth and reason, in all those representations which he so often delights to make of the terrors of despotism, and the advantages of liberty. If justice and humanity are sometimes wanting toward the people in those who govern them: they who are so industrious to infuse fears and suspicions, and to spread seditious opinions among them, will rarely mend the matter; but serve in the issue to make the people more unhappy than ever. Religion gives us better lessons for this purpose, and much wiser too, than all the boasted maxims of the modern philosophy.

"When a man assumes the haughty airs of this author, and listens to nothing but the suggestions of his own fancy, he takes upon him to correct those notions which are common to all mankind; to dispute self-evident principles; to contradict opinions established on the best authority; and deny facts which have been incontestably proved. When he sets himself up as a sovereign judge of parts and genius, of all writings and all sciences, of all arts and all learning, he must then be in danger of falling into frequent contradictions and palpable blunders. Many are the rocks on which such a bold adventurer may split; and it has not been Mr. Voltaire's good fortune to escape them."

After this, the learned Abbé proceeds to point out some of those instances in which Mr. Voltaire has contradicted himself: of which I shall give you a specimen in another letter.

LETTER XXV.

ON THE SAME.

I SHALL trouble you no farther with Mr. Voltaire, when I have added an example or two of those frequent contradictions which occur in his writings, that you may have an idea of his peculiar genius for falsification.

" It is rather wonderful (says our learned Abbé) that with such lively parts, and such a powerful memory, Mr. Voltaire should have fallen into such manifest contradictions.

" In his General History * he tells us, it never was the principle of the Roman senate or the emperors to persecute any body for the sake of their religion: that the Christian Church had its freedom from the beginning; that it was permitted to extend itself, and was even protected publicly by several of the emperors.

" But in his History of the Age of Lewis XIV †. he says, this same Christian Church resisted the authority of the emperors from the beginning, and in defiance of all their edicts, held its private assemblies in grottos and caves of the earth, till Constantine drew it up from its habitation under ground to place it by the side of his throne.

" In one place he observes ‡, that human nature is every where the same at the bottom, and that nature

* Chap. v. † Connec. du Calvinisme.
‡ Hist. Gen. tom. iii. p. 194.

has established a general resemblance amongst mankind. But in another place *, that there are nations who have no common resemblance even to their next neighbours, and that probably there are different species of men as of other animals.

"He affirms that Michael Servetus †, who was burned alive by order of Calvin at Geneva, denied the eternal Godhead of Jesus Christ: and in the following page he assures us that Servetus did not deny that doctrine.

"Cromwell, according to Mr. Voltaire ‡, bathed himself in blood after he had usurped the royal authority; that he lived under continual apprehensions; never slept two nights together in the same chamber, for fear of being assassinated; and at length died of a fever occasioned by his anxiety.

"And this same Cromwell, as Mr. Voltaire says again §, was an observer of the laws, kept the people at quiet, and died with that firmness which he had shewed all his life, leaving behind him the reputation of a great king, which covered the crimes of his usurpation."

These specimens are sufficient to shew you how Mr. Voltaire has reported things one way or the other, as it served the present argument. When he is to apologise for the cruelties of his heathen friends, Nero is transformed into a nursing-father of the Church: but when the primitive Christians are to be blackened, then his heathens are restored to their proper character of persecutors, that the Christians may be represented as rebels against the imperial authority. To exculpate the heathens, he sets the Church at liberty,

* Hist. Gen. tom. iii. p. 6. † Ibid. tom. iii.
‡ Melang. tom. i. § Siecle de Louis XIV. chap. 5.

and leaves it to spread itself abroad over the world: but to make the Church insignificant, he sends it under ground; as if Constantine had been obliged to look for Christianity, where men look for rabbits, in a hole of the earth.

What I have here given may perhaps raise your curiosity to see more of the learned Abbé's work, and follow that candid writer through the several heads of his undertaking; which in general is judiciously executed, and very entertaining, I hear it is procured with difficulty; and I must own I think it rather a reproach to us, that I am obliged to send you to French writers for satisfaction in this argument. I wish some original work of the kind had appeared in our own language, in which Mr. Voltaire has been made to speak so largely by his English translators.

There is another celebrated work of the same sort with that of the Abbé Nonnette, called *L'Oracle des Nouveaux Philosophes,* of which he speaks with great approbation, but as pursuing a different line from his own. The *Lettres des Juifs*, I think, have been put into English: but the chief design of them is to shew how grossly Mr. Voltaire has erred in many points of learning. Many curious anecdotes relating to the errors of Mr. Voltaire's life, were sent to the Abbé Nonnette, but he excused himself from making any use of them; saying, that his temper was not turned to satire; and that so long as he could confute Mr. Voltaire, he had no occasion to defame him.

The portrait I gave you in my last letter will carry you beyond the person of Mr. Voltaire, and enable you to judge of some others by his example. This arch-deceiver has his followers, who deserve to be exposed to the world nearly as much as he does, having a tincture of his gall, and being well versed in his ar-

tifices. The logic of error has its forms, like the logic of the schools, and its rhetoric has its figures, which are adopted in common by inferior practitioners. But if you see through this master of arts, you will be in less danger from the under-graduates of the same profession.

As men are by nature greedy of novelty, and listen with attention to those who have a story to tell them, provided they have a pen that can furnish out an entertaining narrative, Mr. Voltaire had his reasons for preferring history, as the most popular and convenient vehicle of his errors: and he found it answer. This should teach you to be upon your guard against modern writers of history; who, if they have bad principles, will sophisticate the events and characters of history, and turn them to the same purposes as he did, to poison the minds of youth, and inflame them with notions, not more adverse to truth and piety than to the peace and prosperity of the kingdom. If you study history, either for improvement or amusement, let it be your endeavour to select those writers who were good men as well as good historians; but be cautious how you trust yourself to a libertine; he has some ill design upon you, whether he writes from the Lake of Geneva, or from the other side of the Tweed: and it will make no difference to you whether he is called Hume or Voltaire.

History of late times, has been craftily used as a commodious vehicle to infidelity and sedition, I would therefore recommend to every young reader, who is capable of relishing and improving by it, what *Strada*, a very pleasing author, has written upon history, in his *Prolusiones Academicæ*, particularly his Second Discourse, which contains a just censure of Tacitus the historian. To this let him take as a sup-

plement, Hunter's *Observations on Tacitus*. Finding this book spoken of with extreme contempt in a virulent publication, entitled *The Confessional*, a factious libel upon the Church of England, I presumed there must be something very good in it, and determined to inform myself. Accordingly I found it a very excellent and pleasant work, full of learning, spirit, good principles, and sound criticism; so necessary to the present times, that no young person, who reads, or intends to read, history, should be without it; and if it is become scarce, I wish it were reprinted for this good purpose.

LETTER XXVI.

ON PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

As you are intended for the Church, it will be prudent to arm yourself with such considerations as may serve to keep your judgment clear and undisturbed: that you may be easy in your mind, as well as active and serviceable in your profession. In the course of your reading, some things will probably be thrown in your way to perplex you: and I can assure you, there is nothing more likely to corrupt and weaken your judgment, than some notions which have been circulated concerning judgment itself.

The case would be thought very strange, if a man were to see the worse for studying optics: but you

would wonder the less at this, if he thought he had discovered, or that somebody else had discovered for him, that the eye has no need of any external aids for distinguishing the relations of objects, their colours, magnitudes, distances, and such like; but can see best by its own native light. Something of this kind has really befallen those, who through vanity, self-interest, or some other mistake, have attributed so much to their own minds, that they have impaired their judgment. You will seldom fail to find in such persons a desire to draw you over to their party, by tempting you to attribute too much to yourself, as they have done; and then they mean to take advantage of the consequences, which they understand well enough: that is, when you are grown conceited, they can lead you into their own opinions.

Every controversial writer against the doctrine or discipline of the Church of England (of which the late times have unhappily produced a very great number), has much to offer in favour of the *liberty*, the *authority*, and the *rights* of *private judgment*: a sort of flattery which easily finds its way to the hearts of the young and ignorant. Pride and indolence are always forward enough to believe, without being argued into it, that they have nothing to do upon questions of the utmost importance, but to look inwards, and ask their own opinions. This persuasion precludes the use of all those qualifications with which human judgment wants to be assisted; it is an error which breeds many others, and seldom admits of reformation: for how can he be brought to see his mistake, who has made it a rule to shut his eyes?

What we call *private judgment* is the judgment of a private person against the sense of the public, and in opposition to established laws and regulations: in

other words, it is the judgment of an individual against the judgment of the society to which he belongs. They say, every individual must have a liberty to exercise this judgment: and so I say likewise: for nothing can be enacted by public authority, which private judgment cannot arraign and condemn, if it is so disposed. When public authority has determined that two and two make four; thoughts are free; and an individual may deny that, or any other position whatever, and no law on earth can hinder him from so doing; for no society can make a law that shall hinder a man from being a fool. For himself, and within his own mind, where every man holds an œcumenical council, he will judge of things as they appear to him; and nobody alive can help it; and therefore we are obliged to allow that every individual has a *liberty of private judgment*, that is, he has an actual liberty of contradicting all mankind, and of judging in opposition to all the law and all the reason in the world.

But now I must inform you, that they who have so much to urge in favour of this natural liberty, have pushed the matter farther, and argued for its *authority;* first, with respect to a man's self; and, secondly, with respect to the public. It has been pleaded, that a man is *justified* in his sentiments, because they are his sentiments; and that one persuasion, so far as the man himself is concerned, is as good as another; because he is not justified by the goodness of the *matter* believed, but by the *sincerity* with which he believes it. On which principle, lies are as good as truth, and a chimera may answer the purpose of a sacrament.

Then, with respect to the public, it has been urged, that society must have regard, in all matters of conscience, to the judgment of every individual, and esta-

blish nothing of this kind till all the unreasonable and ignorant people in a country, (and such there will be in all countries) are first agreed as to the propriety of it. Here, it is presupposed, as you will immediately perceive, that society has no rule to go by, in matters of conscience, but their own judgment: if there is any rule which lays a common obligation on all parties, then this reasoning falls to the ground: for, by the authority of that rule, society may proceed to establish whatever is thence necessary for the good of the whole, without suspending its judgment till individuals are satisfied.

Such are the claims of this redoubtable champion called Private Judgment: which protests against all creeds, and would new-model all states: however, let us be of good courage, and take a nearer view of him.

The judgment of an individual will be weighty or insignificant, as it is the judgment of reason or the judgment of passion. Whatever judgment a man may have formed within himself on any particular question, it must have been formed either with the means of knowledge, or without them; if without them, it is the judgment of ignorance; and is in fact not judgment, but a rash and groundless decision of the imagination: if with the means of knowledge, then we must consider what those means are.

Knowledge is conveyed to the mind either through the bodily senses, or by conversation with men, or by reading of books. There are many great subjects in which a man's own apprehension and experience will carry him but a little way; and even where experience ought to guide us, few men have spirit and industry to gather up what they learn in that manner. As to books, the majority are ignorant of languages;

without which they cannot read some, nor judge critically of others. If they are engaged in secular business, they are not at leisure; and if they have not been brought up to literature, they are but ill prepared to take advantage of this source of information. It follows, therefore, that most of the private judgment which is found amongst mankind, is not original in themselves, though by its name it always affects to be so, but is borrowed from the persons by whom they have been educated, or with whom they have conversed. And this observation will teach you, by the way, that error in judgment is by no means confined to the illiterate. The common people have their mistakes, which we call *vulgar errors:* but many more monstrous and dangerous opinions are taken up by men of education than by the illiterate, in whom common sense retains that native power which art hath partly extinguished in the others, by introducing false, but specious rules of judgment, several of which I could produce.

It is the fate of scholars to fall early in life into the company of their elders or their equals, from whom they imbibe a set of principles to which they are soon attached, either because those principles flatter their pride, or encourage their idleness, or agree with their inclinations and appetites; and unless they are blessed with natural strength of mind and rectitude of intention, and favoured by some happy incidents, which bring new thoughts to their minds, their reading and conversation flow generally in the same channel throughout the whole course of their lives; they turn away with scorn from every thing that contradicts their favourite traditions; and thus they live and die the dupes of the first information they received, as do the Jews, Turks, and Gentoos. When they write books

(if they commence authors) they bend and distort matters of fact, and represent all men and all things as they are seen through the medium of their own prejudices. If you attempt to reconcile such persons to any truth, you must treat them as men treat a one-eyed horse, turn their blind side toward an object, that they may go forward without starting.

It is not my design to write a satire upon mankind; I have compassion for all men in the worst of their mistakes, because they themselves are generally the greatest sufferers; but it is necessary for your safety, that I should represent things as they are, without fear or favour; and I am not singular in my observations. Mankind are such now as they used to be formerly; and where their nature operates freely, it will act now as it did then. Cicero said, many ages ago, *Plura enim multò homines judicant odio, aut amore, aut cupiditate, aut iracundia, aut dolore, aut lætitia, aut spe, aut timore, aut terrore, aut alia aliqua* PERMOTIONE MENTIS, *quam* VERITATE.—"Men are much more disposed to give their judgment of things out of hatred, or love, or inclination, or anger, or resentment, or joy, or hope, or fear, or cowardice, or any other emotion of the mind, than out of a regard to truth."—In virtue of this observation, he directs his young orator to trust the cause at last to an experiment upon the passions of his hearers. Though this is but a rule of oratory, it carries with it a reflection which bears very hard upon human nature. Hence it appears, that men are actuated, and often very violently, by a principle which has no regard to merit, truth, or justice. And now, I think, the question concerning the inherent *rights* of such a principle is very easily settled. Societies who have any concern for their own welfare and safety, have nothing to do but to guard

against it, and keep a jealous eye upon it; for it would confound all truth, and unhinge the world.

The grand motives on which men judge who do not judge on principles of right reason, are custom, vanity, and self-interest. I knew a gentleman who was allowed to be a person of piety and benevolence, and yet his example afforded a striking instance of the weakness of private judgment. When he first took the sacred function upon him he went to reside in a city where Arianism had long been a fashionable doctrine: here he was touched with a pious indignation, like that of Paul at Athens, and *his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to* heterodoxy. In the execution of his office, he gave an unpopular proof of his zeal in the congregation, which at that time was much talked of. Some time afterwards he removed into another neighbourhood, where the clergy being generally addicted to the good old way, orthodoxy was no distinction: in this situation he became a zealous Arian: took up his pen in the cause; and I have been informed he was a considerable member among the gentlemen of the Feathers-Tavern. Dr. Young calls Pride the *universal passion:* and I think we may with equal propriety say of it, that whensoever we are surprised with strange anomalies in the words and actions of men, otherwise good and virtuous, it is the *universal explanation.*

Custom is another principle which has a fatal effect in directing men's judgments, and keeping their minds in bondage. To account for their opinions nothing more is necessary than to ask where they have been, and what they have been doing? Trace them back to the places of their early education, and follow them from thence into their connections in life, and you will find how they fell into their present principles. You

have some knowledge of a right honourable gentleman who is regular in his morals, and serious in his behaviour, tender to his family, generous to his friends; and yet is perpetually struggling and raising disturbances, and perhaps would venture his head for the sake of some fantastical ideas in politics, which would be pernicious to his country, and will probably never do any good to himself. You think all this utterly unaccountable in a man who wants nothing that the world can give him: but I will explain the whole in a few words. When he was a boy his father sent him to a republican seminary, by the advice of a certain bishop, who was no great friend to the Church of England.

It is to be numbered among the many misfortunes and miseries of human life, that men differ so widely in their judgments, and upon such slight grounds; but you must have patience to see this, without being corrupted or perplexed: their example is rather to be lamented than imitated; and their opinions afford no argument against the truth. They judge according to the circumstances of their birth, parentage, and education: men always have done so, and always will to the end of the world. If a monkey could write, and give his judgment of the constitution of the world, and the Histoire Generale of the animal creation, he would produce something to the following effect. He would begin with informing you, that the monkey is the original man, and man a clumsy imitation of the monkey. Then he would describe the monkey-nature by all its perfections; the human by its wants and weaknesses. He would appeal to the order of nature itself; which has ordained that men shall plough the ground, and plant maize, for monkies to come and eat it; which proves, by the plainest of all arguments, an undeniable fact, a stubborn sort of

evidence, that nature intended man for a labourer, and a monkey for a gentleman; for nature never sent monkies to plough. His native freedom would demonstrate a farther superiority; for while men are gathered into societies within walls, like a fold of sheep, to be governed by laws, and driven by authority, and loaded with taxes, like beasts of burthen, every monkey is his own master, and takes possession of the woods without going to the lawyers for a title.

Thus would the private judgment of a monkey argue, in opposition to the better knowledge of the human species. By monkies he would be heard with applause; and when his reputation was established as a writer, his name would be a compendious proof of his doctrine. Some things unfavourable to his system would of course be concealed: he would never tell you, that while monkies take themselves for gentlemen, mankind shoot them for thieves, and chain them to a post for a shew, amongst the other freeholders of the desert.

THE

CHURCHMAN'S CATECHISM,

OR

ELEMENTS OF INSTRUCTION

ON THE

NATURE AND CONSTITUTION

OF THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH;

BRIEFLY SHEWING,

I. What the Church is, and how it is called.
II. The Signs or Marks by which the Church is known.
III. The Duties taught by the Church.
IV. The Discipline of the Church.
V. The Authority of the Church in Matters of Faith and Doctrine.
VI. The Nature and Sinfulness of Schism.
VII. The false Principles on which Schism defends itself.
VIII. The difference between Morality and Religion.

Extracted chiefly from Bishop BEVERIDGE; Archbishop POTTER; Bishop HORNE's CHARGE; and a late ESSAY on the CHURCH.

Intended for the Use of Sunday Schools and such adult Persons as are yet uninstructed in the Subject.

PREFACE.

The preservation of unity in the Church is never to be expected, unless Christian people are seasonably instructed in those doctrines, which lead to peace and uniformity of worship; and are convinced betimes of the scandal and sinfulness of Schism.

It is therefore much to be lamented, and I fear we are chargeable with some neglect, that our children in the Church of England have hitherto received so little information concerning the nature and original of the society to which they belong: while our dissenters are indefatigable in the zeal and diligence with which they inculcate, as early as possible, the grounds and reasons of their non-conformity.

There is a *Catechism* of the *Protestant Dissenters*, in common use; which, instead of teaching the Christian faith, and recommending the Christian spirit of peace and love, infuses into the tender minds of children a bitter dislike to the Church of England. They are told, that our Church is popish and superstitious in its worship; arbitrary and unscriptural in its doctrines; corrupt and defective in its discipline; and that it derives no authority from Jesus Christ, but only from the state, which forms it into an establishment. No ill-natured cavil is here omitted; and the abuses of modern times, which charity would cover and lament, are held out and magnified. The like uncharitableness is remarkable in a syllabus of Lectures by a late Mr. *Robinson*, a dissenting teacher of Cambridge; as unjust and malevolent an invective as ever came from the conventicle. What must a child be who comes out of such a school? brought up to envy and uncharitableness! filled with a sort of *negative* religion, from an *opposition-catechism!* and,

perhaps, under such prepossessions as will never be reasoned with afterwards. And if it should be found, that persons who communicate such doctrines are vigilant and industrious in strengthening their party, and drawing away children from our schools to their own, it behoves us to be a little more upon our guard in this matter. Let us then practise some of that wisdom which may be learned from an adversary: let us begin, as early as we can, to fortify the minds of our children with those good principles of truth and obedience, which will be sufficient to preserve them under the temptations they shall meet with as they come forward in the world.

That a *form* (however imperfect) may not be wanting, I have taken the pains to extract from Bishop Beveridge's excellent discourse on Acts ii. 47, *The Lord added to the Church such as should be saved;* and from Archbishop Potter's Treatise on Church Government; and from Bishop Horne's Charge; and from a late *Essay on the Church;* such elements of instruction, as may lay a foundation in the minds of our children of the Church; who by a peculiar blessing of God upon the present times, are now come more immediately under our care than heretofore. It is a pleasure to consider the institution of Sunday Schools as a step to national reformation: but some persons of great learning and judgment have published their suspicions, that the sectaries will take advantage of it, to draw to themselves as many as they can of our children and servants; and so the common people will be infected with schism and sedition. Such consequences would be serious indeed, and ought to be provided against in time. If the fears of these worthy persons are well grounded, (and some late occurrences have taught us that they are so) the necessity for such a work as the present is more apparent. And as it is compiled in a spirit of peace and good-will, it were much to be wished, that they who have made a science of non-conformity would give their children one fair opportunity of hearing some of our teaching; that they may have it in their power to make a liberal and impartial judgment for themselves. Our teaching is not *negative* like theirs; it is not *against* any thing; it follows fact, Scripture, and primitive example; it is not intended to cast any *odium* upon *others*, but to defend and preserve that form of religious doctrine, by which we hope to be saved; and if

the Dissenters would embrace it, and keep up to it better than we do, we are persuaded they might be saved also, without their non-conformity. Thus much is certain, that by uniting with us, they might be turned from that dangerous temper of mind, which is so often tempting them to disturb the public peace by works of envy, hatred, disloyalty, and false doctrine; the last of which, as the wisest among them know and lament, is rapidly gaining ground in their congregations. They of the Church of Rome also, who think we neither value nor understand Christian unity, may here find, that we are as ready as they are to render what is due to the Church of Christ, without making any improper or superstitious use of its ordinances and authority.

The word *morality* having of late years been much misunderstood, and been the occasion of some dangerous mistakes, a short catechetical instruction is added in a second part, shewing the distinction between Morality and Religion; which all Christian teachers in these days ought to inculcate: and we hope it will be attended to.

THE

CHURCHMAN'S CATECHISM.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT THE CHURCH IS, AND HOW IT IS CALLED.

Q. WHAT is the meaning of the word *Church?*

A. It is ordinarily taken for the house of God, or *place* of divine worship *.

Q. Is it any where so taken in the Scripture?

A. In 1 *Cor.* xx. 22, it is used for the house or place of worship, in which Christians assembled together.

Q. What doth it signify farther?

A. It signifies the settlement of the Christian religion in any city or country; which is what we understand by the Church of *Ephesus,* the Church of *Antioch,* the Church of *England,* &c.

Q. But does it not signify more than that?

A. It signifies the whole Christian society, or Catholic Church, of which Jesus Christ is the head; and of which every national Church, properly so called, is a member.

* It is taken in this sense in our two excellent Homilies on the *Right Use of the Church.* In the history of the Gospel, the *place of worship,* which we call the *Church,* had the names of the *Temple* and the *Synagogue;* which Christ himself and his Apostles duly frequented.

Q. Why is the Church called *Holy?*

A. For several reasons. First, to distinguish it as a society different from the world, which is *wicked,* and *out* of which they are *called* who are brought into the Church.

Q. On what other account is the Church *Holy?*

A. From its relation to God; to whom whatever belongs, whether it be a place, a person, or a thing, it must be holy from that relation.

Q. What farther reason is there?

A. Because the Church, from its relation to God, is a cause of holiness in man. Its principal use is to sanctify those who are in it, and who are called *saints,* that is, holy persons. (1 *Cor.* i. 2.)

Q. What are the different states of those who are in the world, and those who are in the Church?

A. The world *lieth in wickedness;* and they who are in the world only, will be *condemned with the world:* but they who are in the Church, are called to a state of salvation. (*Acts* iii. 47.)

Q. Has a man's situation any effect upon his character?

A. Certainly; if it be not his own fault: for as the world corrupts men, the Church sanctifies them.

Q. How can you prove that?

A. Our Saviour said, *the Temple sanctified the gold* which was brought into it. Therefore if the souls of men are as precious as gold, and the Christian Church as worthy as the Jewish temple, men must in a sense become holy by being made members of it.

Q. Is there not another reason why the Church is called holy?

A. Because it is a body, of which the Holy Spirit of God is the animating principle, or life and soul. (1 *Cor.* xii. 13.)

Q. Why is the Church called *Catholic?*

A. Catholic means *universal:* and the Church was so called, because though it was spread over all nations, it was every where the same; and so, in the whole, one Church, one body of Christ. It is also called Catholic, as distinguished from the Jewish Church, which was particular or peculiar, being confined to one nation or people; whereas the Christian Church takes in all the nations of the world.

Q. How do the two societies of the Church and the World appear when they are compared together?

A. There is the like difference between them as between the waters of the flood and the ark of *Noah*;* the city of *Sodom* devoted to destruction, and *Zoar* the city of refuge; *Egypt* the house of slavery, and *Canaan* the land of liberty.

Q. What reason have we to think that our own Church is a part of the Catholic Church of Christ?

A. Because we find in it the ordinances, the doctrines, and the authority of the Catholic Church.

Q. How does it preserve the authority of the Catholic Church?

A. Because it derives its authority by succession from the Apostles.

Q. Why is succession necessary to a true Church?

A. Because none can make a Church but Jesus Christ himself, from whom we derive it; and without the rule of *succession,* any company of people, even of women, might make a Church. But the Church being the *Church of God,* and not a human society, men can no more make *God's Church* than they can make *God's world.*

Q. How does it appear that our Church preserves the same ordinances?

* See the first Collect in the office for Public Baptism.

A. We find in it the same means of grace to fit men for salvation as were in the Church of the Apostles.

Q. Which are they?

A. Baptism with water; Confirmation; Absolution or forgiveness of sin; Benediction, which signifies consecration or authoritative blessing; the Lord's Supper; Ordination by the laying on of hands, &c.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SIGNS OR MARKS BY WHICH THE CHURCH IS TO BE KNOWN.

Q. Every society or body corporate must exist under some outward form, as every natural body doth. By what outward form hath the Christian Church been distinguished?

A. By the order and authority of a lawful ministry of God's appointing.

Q. How many orders of ministers have there been in the Christian Church?

A. Three: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: as many as were before in the Jewish Church.

Q. From whence do we receive them?

A. From the first Church in the New Testament; where we find the three orders of *Apostles*, *Elders* (or *Presbyters*) and *Deacons*. (*Acts* xv. 6. and vi. 6.)

Q. How does it appear that the Apostles were of an order above the Presbyters or Elders?

A. Because out of the latter one was raised to the same office from which Judas had fallen; and so was of the rank with those twelve, whom Christ himself had ordained, as the chief order of ministers in his Church. (*Acts* i. 25.)

Q. Can you shew that the same superiority continued afterwards?

A. It appears that *Timothy* had an authority over *Elders or Presbyters,* to judge them when they were accused, (1 *Tim.* v. 19.) and that he had a power of ordaining by laying on of hands. (*Ibid.* v. 22.) The superscription also, at the end of the second epistle, informs us accordingly, that he was ordained the *first Bishop* of the Church of the Ephesians. These epistles shew there were many presbyters, but only one such bishop as had judicial authority over ministers of the Church.

Q. What is an Archbishop?

A. The chief bishop of a province.

Q. Why is this pre-eminence necessary?

A. Because if the bishops of a province meet in council, some one of them must take the chair, and lead the business, to prevent confusion, as in other assemblies. Thus in the council of the Church at Jerusalem, James, the apostle or bishop of Jerusalem, is first in the council and gives *sentence* upon it*. (*Acts.* xv. 19.)

Q. How many provinces are there in England?

A. Two: *Canterbury* for the *southern* dioceses, and *York* for the *northern.*

Q. Whence come dignitaries and lay-officers in the Church?

* This fact is remarkable against the supposed supremacy of St. Peter.

A. From the favour of Christian princes in Christian countries.

Q. Whence doth it appear that the Church must be a visible and distinguishable society?

A. Because Christ hath given us a precept, which cannot otherwise be obeyed. "*Tell it unto the Church.*" (*Matt.* xviii. 17.) And the Apostle commands Christians to *obey them that have the rule over them:* (*Heb.* xiii. 17.) in which he supposes we may always know to what society and to what persons our obedience is due.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE DUTIES PRESCRIBED BY THE CHURCH.

Q. WHAT duties are enjoined by the Church, to be practised by all its members?

A. The same which Christ commanded to all his disciples: *prayer, fasting, and alms.*

Q. How did Christians worship in the primitive Church?

A. By falling down upon their knees, when occasion required it. Kneeling is the proper posture of supplication. *I bow my knees,* saith the apostle St. Paul. *He kneeled down and prayed with them all.* (*Acts* xx. 36.)

Q. What respect was payed to public prayer by Christ and his apostles?

A. Stated hours of prayer were appointed by the Church, which the apostles continued to observe by resorting to the temple, even after the ascension of Jesus Christ. *Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.*

Q. What follows from hence?

A. That, if Christians have a Church, they should resort to it at the hours of prayer, after the example of the apostles.

Q. Does it appear that God himself had any respect to these hours of prayer?

A. It appears from many examples. *Cornelius*, according to the custom of the Jews, to whom he was a proselyte, observed the duties of prayer and alms at the appointed hours; and the angel was sent to him at the *ninth hour*, one of the hours of public prayer.

Q. Give me another example.

A. Peter went up to his devotions at the *sixth* hour, when God sent him that vision, which informed him under a figure of the acceptance of the Gentiles. (*Acts* x. 9.)

Q. Can you give me any examples from the Old Testament?

A. Fire was sent from heaven upon Elijah's altar *at the time of the evening sacrifice:* (1 *Kings* xviii. 36.) The angel Gabriel came to Daniel about the time of the evening oblation, (*Dan.* ix. 21.) observing the hour of the Church service, though there could then be no sacrifice to mark it.

Q. What doth Christ say of the Church?

A. He saith, *My house is an house of prayer:* and that man will ever be found the best Christian who attends the Church more for prayer than preaching.

It is no certain test of true piety, when a man runs after sermons, and neglects the great duty of public prayer. The *itching* of the *ear* is not a virtue but a distemper; often attended with many other dangerous symptoms.

Q. What provision did the Church make for preaching at the Reformation?

A. The Church found it expedient to lay some restraint upon preaching as well as upon praying, and therefore provided an excellent form of sound teaching in the Homilies; from which our congregation might still learn much truth and be much edified.

Q. Why doth the Church appoint certain holidays with particular services?

A. To direct our thoughts and devotions to the life and actions of Jesus Christ, which we should be apt to forget, unless reminded by the season. The common year is divided by the motions of the *natural sun;* but the Calendar of the Church follows the motions of the *Sun of Righteousness.*

Q. Why do we observe Saints' days?

A. To commemorate the virtues and sufferings of the Saints; that we may be stirred up to imitate their faith and patience *.

Q. The next duty enjoined by the Church is that of *fasting:* what is the use of it?

A. To moderate the desires of the body, and bring them into subjection to the spirit. (1 *Cor.* ix. 27.)

Q. What other use is there in fasting?

* The work of Mr. *Nelson*, on the festivals of the Church, is the best extant, for instructing families in Christian learning and piety: and some thousands of good people are edified by the use of it. A short work of the same intention, but fitter for children, is Mr. *Crossman's Introduction*, of which we suppose thirty thousand may have been used in our Sunday schools.

A. It gives efficacy to prayer, and turns away the wrath of God from us. Devils were cast out by prayer and fasting: and when the people of Nineveh proclaimed a fast, God is said to have repented of the evil he had threatened, and he did it not. (*Jonah* iii. 5. 10.)

Q. Which is the greatest fast of the year?

A. That which is called *Lent:* in memory, and after the example of Christ, who fasted forty days in the wilderness. It precedes Passion-week and Easter, that we may be better prepared for the celebration of that holy season.

Q. What are *alms?*

A. Gifts of mercy: that is, money given by devout persons, for the relief of poor and distressed Christians.

Q. On what occasion were alms given?

A. Alms were anciently joined with prayer; and were thought to render prayers more acceptable. Poor objects were therefore laid at the gate of the temple, to be relieved by those who were going in to pray.

Q. Why do alms render our prayers acceptable?

A. The reason is plain: for when we beg of God to relieve our wants, it is but just we should relieve the wants of others.

Q. When are alms more particularly required by the Church?

A. In the communion service: when with the holy oblation of Christ's body and blood, it is right we should offer ourselves and our worldly substance to be consecrated with the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice; that we, and all we have, may be acceptable and blessed.

Q. What is the present state of alms-giving?

A. Not on so good a footing, as when the rates, by which the poor are now maintained, were supplied by the voluntary offerings of devout Christians and religious societies *.

Q. How is the defect in a great measure compensated ?

A. By the many charities of hospitals, schools, and charitable associations, for the relief of mutual wants by mutual contributions ; which charities happily abound amongst us : but still there is great room to wish for more alms and more devotion, in the old Christian way †.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE DISCIPLINEOF THE CHURCH.

Q. WHAT is meant by the *discipline* of the Church ?

A. That constitution of rules and orders, by which

* The relief of the parish poor was anciently a work of choice and piety, before legal *rates* were found necessary : and in many churches the box is still extant, which received the offerings of devout persons.

† The giving of alms is ignorantly, and with very bad effect, called by the name of *charity*, as if the giving of alms were the whole of charity : whereas a man *may give all his goods to feed the poor*, and have no charity. Of late a new *philanthropy* is come into fashion, which affects but little relation to the Christian virtue of charity, and is nearer of kin to the charity of *Free Masonry*. Let the Christian distinguish properly ; and if he gives a preference, let it be given to those who *belong to Christ*.

the clergy and the congregation are obliged to walk, and to worship God in truth and holiness.

Q. Suppose any of the congregation are wicked and disgrace their profession?

A. The churchwardens are under oath to present such twice in a year, that they may be brought to repentance, or cast out of the Church.

Q. What is the difference between a clergyman and a layman?

A. A clergyman is a person ordained by the bishop to minister in holy things: a *layman* is one of *the people,* not in holy orders.

Q. What lay-officers have authority to act for the discipline of the Church?

A. The churchwardens, chancellors, officials and officers of the court should be laymen.

Q. Why so?

A. That the people when they are corrected for their offences may not think themselves hardly dealt with; the persons to whom they are committed being of their own order.

Q. How long have lay-officers acted in the affairs of the Church?

A. Almost ever since the conversion of the Roman empire, for 1300 years; when persons learned in the laws were granted to the Christians for settling their differences.

Q. What security have we that they will not impose upon us and oppress us?

A. They are all under oath to deal uprightly, without respect to favour or reward; which is all the security we can have from any man.

Q. What is *excommunication?*

A. The casting of an impenitent sinner out of the Church.

Q. When is this done?

A. When a sinner refuses to obey the rules and admonitions of the Church: as, in like case, a refractory member is separated from any other society: for, the very being of such a society is inconsistent with the membership of such persons, as act in defiance to its laws.

Q. What doth our Saviour say of such persons?

A. That if any one *refuse to hear the Church,* he should be to us a *heathen* and a *publican.* (*Matt.* xviii. 17.)

Q. Is discipline properly observed in the Church of England?

A. It is to be lamented by all serious Christians, that Church laws are not better enforced upon the clergy and the laity: for impunity breeds impiety; and impiety grows bolder by neglect, till it defies all subjection: and then the judgment of God upon a people is not far off.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH IN MATTERS OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE.

Q. If there are disputes among Christians about the faith, by whom must they be settled?

A. Either by themselves, or by the Church.

Q. What will be the case if they judge for themselves, with what is called *private judgment?*

A. This is contrary to the first law of all society; which provides, that no man should be *judge in his own cause:* for if this were generally admitted, there could be no such thing as society in the world: and the reason of the thing is the same in the Church as in any other society. Confusion must be the end of such a liberty; and Church-confusion is worse in itself, and more fatal in its consequences, than any other.

Q. What is the consequence when men disagree with the Church, and renounce its authority?

A. They no longer agree with one another, but divide into sects of Anabaptists, Quakers, Independents, &c. and fall into the heresies of *Arius, Socinus,* &c. which degenerate into infidelity itself: a lamentable fact, and very dishonourable to the claims of private judgment.

Q. What happened in the last century?

A. The Puritans, who went upon a private spirit, broke into threescore different sects; some of whom held blasphemous opinions *.

Q. What use do the Roman Catholics make of such facts?

A. They lay it all upon the Reformation; saying, that when we leave their Church, we never know where to stop. But this censure is not true of the Church of England; which in her Articles and Liturgy hath preserved the doctrines of the Reformation for two hundred years.

Q. But did not the Church of England go upon *private judgment* against the Church of Rome at the Reformation?

A. The Church of England never claimed a right of judging by individuals (which is the case when judg-

* A dissenting minister at that time has given us a particular account of them. See *Edwards's Gangræna.*

ment is private) but used its public judgment, as a society, against a foreign usurpation. It only reclaimed its ancient rights, upon the ground of *Scripture*, and the pattern of *primitive antiquity*.

Q. Whence come those scoffers and infidels who attack the foundations of Christianity, and are now endeavouring to overthrow its doctrines?

A. They do not *always*, but most commonly arise out of our sectaries: and if they do not, they never fail to enter into a good understanding with them: of which the examples are notorious *.

Q. But if the Church is to decide in controversies of faith, will not that make the Church a judge of the faith itself?

A. By no means: for the Church itself is still subject to the law of faith in the word of God, and is to administer it faithfully, as the *witness* and *keeper of holy writ*, not as a judge over it.

Q. How does this case stand in civil matters?

A. In controversies of law, the judge does not make, but only administers the law: which if private persons were to do for themselves, there could be no end; and justice would become ridiculous. The bold, noisy, and selfish would carry every cause for themselves, and bear down all before them.

Q. How does it appear, that God supports the authority, and respects the office of those who are to minister in his Church?

A. It appears from his promises and his practice.

Q. What are his promises to this effect?

A. He promised to *be with* his Church *to the end of the world:* and has given us an assurance, that *the*

* Mr. *Gibbon* begins his fine laboured invective against Christianity, by siding with the Presbyterians against diocesan episcopacy.

gates of hell (the *powers* of opposition, and the *mouth* of iniquity) shall not *prevail against it.*

Q. How does it appear from his practice?

A. Because the office is not taken out of the hands of his ministers even by God himself.

Q. On what occasions do you find this?

A. When Jesus appeared to Paul, and Paul asked what he was to do, he was answered, that Ananias, a disciple, should be sent to teach him. The Lord does not answer the question; but refers him for instruction to those of his Church upon earth. (*Acts* ix.)

Q. Where again do you find the like?

A. When the Angel appeared to *Cornelius* he did not instruct him himself, but commanded him to *send* for *Peter.*

Q. Where again?

A. When the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading the prophet Isaiah, the Spirit did not teach him by his own immediate act, but bid *Philip* go and preach to him.

Q. Why was all this done?

A. To secure us from the impositions of a private spirit: inasmuch as we may learn from the example of God himself, that a man has not the truth, unless he has received it from the Church.

CHAPTER VI.

OF SCHISM.

Q. What is *schism?*

A. It is the sin of making a *division* in the Church, and separating ourselves from it.

Q. What is the danger of so doing?

A. The first danger is that of committing a great sin; because if charity be the first of virtues, schism, which is its contrary, must be the first of sins. Take the Apostle's description of *charity,* 1 *Cor.* xiii. and reverse it in every article, and we shall have the description of *schism.*

Q. What farther danger is there in schism?

A. The obvious danger of losing the benefit of God's ordinances for our salvation; as a limb severed from the body loses the *life* of the body.

Q. Why so?

A. Because if we have no true Church, we have no true *sacraments,* to which the promises of *life* are annexed.

Q. What farther danger is there?

A. The danger of falling into habits of censoriousness and uncharitableness against our brethren; the bitterness of unjust accusation; and also into the error of doctrine.

Q. Why is this?

A. Because they who leave the Church, must make the worst of it to justify themselves. They are therefore naturally inclined to exaggerate and triumph in

the defects of the Church, if any are to be found; and to *make* them where there are none. Instead of labouring to amend the Church, they are tempted to take pleasure in its corruptions.

Q. What farther evil is there in separation?

A. The common cause of Christianity suffers, when the Church is deprived of the assistance and example of men who are otherwise good and virtuous. Our loss is *double* when they who should be *for* us are *against* us: and the characters of such, being *specious,* are held up to the world, as a proof that schism is no sin.

Q. Why is there also a propensity to error in doctrine?

A. A spirit of opposition, beginning in some things, extends naturally to other things: and we see by experience, that the religion of separation hath not so much of Christianity in it now, as it had some years ago; but it is degenerating daily into the wild philosophy of Socinianism and Infidelity.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THOSE FALSE PRINCIPLES BY WHICH SCHISM DEFENDS ITSELF.

Q. ARE there any false principles, which have a tendency to produce and justify schism?

A. There are several. Persons who have not been able to prove their title as members of the Church,

have feigned an invisible or spiritual Church, not of this world, in which a man may have communion with Christ, without joining himself to any visible society of Christians.

Q. Where is the error of this?

A. No such distinction is warranted by the Scripture. But if it were, still we must attain to things invisible by the way of outward visible ordinances. We might as well hope to be saved by *invisible sacraments* as in an *invisible Church.* Neither is it the doctrine of the Scripture that our Church-membership consists in holding communion with *Christ only:* it being also required, that we should hold communion with one another—*We are one bread and one body.* (1 Cor. x. 17.) *We are baptized into one body.* (1 Cor. xii. 13.) *We are members of one another.* (Eph. iv. 25.) Schism is not properly a sin which breaks the union between Christ and the Christian; but which divides Christians from one another.

Q. Are there any other principles applied to the same purpose?

A. Predestination and election to grace; pretended inspiration; and the sufficiency of moral virtue.

Q. How do these operate?

A. The first sets us above the Church: the second above the Bible: and the third above Christian worship.

Q. How does the first set us above the Church?

A. Because if men are predestinated and elected to salvation by a secret decree of God, independent of all ordinances, there is no need of any Church at all.

Q. How does the second set us above the Scripture?

A. Because, if we act under the same inspiration

as the apostles and prophets, we become a rule to ourselves against all other Christians.

Q. How does the third set us above Christian worship?

A. Because it teaches, that religion consists in what we *do*, not in what we *are*, and what we *believe* or *profess*: and so moral honesty between man and man will be accepted of God without faith to recommend it; as well in a Turk as in a Christian.

Q. Is there not also another new opinion which justifies all errors and divisions among Christians?

A. There is an opinion that *sincerity* in any profession will make it acceptable. But if this were so, then a lye may have all the good effects of truth if it be but *believed.*

Q. But hath not Christ said, *he that despiseth you despiseth me?*

A. Therefore it must surely be very dangerous to teach men that they may despise the ministry of the Church and yet be innocent; when Christ himself hath taught us, that in such a case a man is to be considered as *an heathen man and a publican.*

Q. Is not the fact of the Church of England's Reformation objected to us, as an example which justifies the separation of our sectaries?

A. It has been so applied both by the Papists and the Dissenters: but the cases are not parallel. The Church of England, which had been a Church before any preachers entered this island from Rome, only returned to its original independence, and threw off an unjust usurpation: whereas our sectaries have thrown off the just and lawful authority of reformed episcopacy. If the cases are the same, then the authority of the pope over the bishops of this Church was a *legal* authority.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONCLUSION.

Q. What use are we to make of the doctrine in the foregoing chapters?

A. We are to consider, what is the duty of Christian people in respect to the Church: which is, to honour God in all his institutions; as knowing that our disobedience is not against man, but against the Lord. (*Exod.* xvi. 8.)

Q. How can we rebel against God whom we do not see?

A. We cannot rebel against him in his own person; the only possible way is, to affront him in *things, persons, times,* or *places* which belong to him. In such cases, he takes the affront to himself. The text of *Hos.* iv. 4. represents it as a heinous sin, even the pattern of all wickedness, *to strive with the priest;* for which Corah and his company perished in a fearful manner in the wilderness.

Q. What doth our Saviour say?

A. Our Saviour commands us to *hear the Church.* Yea he taught the people to obey the scribes and pharisees, because, bad as they were, they still retained the authority of succession, and *sat in the seat of Moses:* and he himself, for an example to us, attended the services of that temple which he was about to destroy. Why should not the Christian ministry of this day sit in the seat of the apostles, as the Jews,

in the last days of their Church, sat in the seat of Moses, who was so long before them?

Q. What is our duty in respect to the maintaining and supporting the Church and its ministry?

A. When the Jews observed a conscientious payment of their *tithes*, down to the most trifling articles, our Saviour told them, it was what they *ought to do.*

Q. Why did God ordain the maintenance of his ministers by tithes and offerings?

A. To render that maintenance more *certain* in itself, and *independent* of the people: for which reasons the method is much disliked and exclaimed against by those who are no friends to Christianity or its ministry. In this way of supporting the Church, the devotion of the people pays that first to God, which the minister takes to himself*. If a minister is the people's hireling, he will be afraid to offend the people by teaching the truth and rebuking vice. Yet, after all, a wise minister will consider the people as the *end*, and himself as the *means*. The Church was not made for Moses; but Moses for the Church.

Q. What is St. Paul's advice upon this subject?

A. He commands us to obey those that watch for our souls, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake: (1 *Thess.* v. 15.) He teaches us (1 *Cor.* xii.) that the *Church is a body*, all the different *members* of which should be at peace together, and have care of each other as in the body natural. Then he proceeds to assure us in the next chapter that it is of so much consequence to preserve the *peace* and *unity* of this *body* (which he calls by the name of *charity* or *love*) that all our works and all our quali-

* This cannot be done when *tithes* are changed into *lands.*

fications without this are of no value, and we ourselves are *nothing!*

Q. Do people see this?

A. Of late we are so full of a spurious affected candour toward all sins and errors; and it is the interest of so many to keep it up, that true charity, such as the Apostle hath enforced, is very little understood. Schismatics teach us, that charity consists in tenderness to those who have broken charity; and if we admonish them to repent of their sin, they say we have *no charity.*

Q. In this critical situation, how are Christians to conduct themselves?

A. They must look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith; who never tempered and qualified his doctrines to please the multitude; but hazarded the contradiction of sinners, the sneers and scoffs of hypocrites, misers, and adulterers; and was at length clamoured out of his life by the voice of a corrupt people, set on by party-leaders and unfaithful ministers.

Q. May we not lessen this danger without sin?

A. Certainly; and it is our duty so to do. We are admonished to *instruct with meekness those that oppose themselves:* to be resolute in the truth, but gentle in the manner of recommending it: avoiding all that intemperate language and personal railing which the sectaries have used against the Church. What errors soever we may find in men, we should be tender to their persons and their feelings. God knoweth more of mens' hearts than we do: he will make allowances for the circumstances they have been under, and the power of early prejudices; so great that no reasons, nothing but divine grace, can contend with them. How much did it require to convince St. Paul! yet he

was a man of a good meaning in his heart. Some of those who contend furiously with us, may, in temper and intention, be such as he was. Wheresoever they are to be found, we should bear with them, for so God himself doth; and we should pray, that they may be farther enlightened. This is the charity of a wise man, and a true Christian.

PART II.

ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORALITY AND RELIGION.

Q. What is *religion?*

A. The rule which teaches us to believe in God and to worship him.

Q. What is meant by *morality?*

A. The rule which teaches us to live soberly and honestly.

Q. What are the great duties of religion?

A. Faith, hope, and charity.

Q. What are the virtues which the teachers of morality have reckoned the principal?

A. They are four in number: *justice, temperance, prudence,* and *fortitude.*

Q. What is justice?

A. The rule by which we give to every man what is due to him.

Q. How far does this extend?

A. To the payment of debts and wages, the giving of tribute to whom tribute is due, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.

Q. What is *temperance?*

A. The rule whereby we restrain and moderate the appetites of the body, which are all given to excess.

Q. What is prudence?

A. The rule by which we distinguish between good and evil; seeking the one and avoiding the other, with a view to their consequences.

Q. What is the meaning of the word *prudence?*

A. It is the same with *providence,* and means *human providence* or *foresight.*

Q. What is fortitude?

A. The rule by which we are to meet danger, and bear sufferings.

Q. Which are the principal *vices?*

A. They are contrary to the principal virtues: injustice, intemperance, imprudence, and cowardice.

Q. What is an unjust man?

A. One who defrauds others of their due, or denies it to them. We commonly call such a man a *rogue.*

Q. What is an intemperate man?

A. One who abuses himself by indulging his appetites.

Q. What do we call him?

A. A glutton, a drunkard, a sot, a beast.

Q. What is an imprudent man?

A. What we commonly call *a fool:* one who acts wrong, and does not foresee the consequence of his own actions, or pays no regard to it; and so brings himself into difficulty, poverty, misery, and contempt.

Q. What is a man without fortitude?

A. He is what we call base and mean-spirited. He fears what a wise man ought not to fear, and generally increases danger by a false endeavour to escape it.

Q. Are the virtues necessary to each other?

A. They always do best together: he who has no temperance will hardly preserve his justice; because he will be wasting upon himself what he should pay to others.

Q. Give me another example.

A. He who has no fortitude, will be tempted to injustice, or falsehood, or treachery, to save himself from danger.

Q. Give me another.

A. He that has no prudence to consider consequences, will not be guarded against the fatal effects of pleasure, extravagance, and intemperance.

Q. How far will the practice of these virtues avail to our salvation?

A. They do well in society, and will assist in carrying us with safety through the world; and therefore every wise man will observe them.

Q. Why will they not save us?

A. Because we are to be saved by *faith.*

Q. But are the virtues then unnecessary?

A. By no means: they are as necessary to Christians as to other men: but we are saved, not by what we *do,* but by that *faith* in the promises, and that *love* to God *with which* we do it.

Q. Where is the propriety, wisdom, and justice, of our being saved by *faith,* and not by *works?*

A. Because all good works of every kind may be practised in hypocrisy, and proceed from some evil or vain motive to deceive men: but in faith there can be no hypocrisy.

Q. Why so?

A. Because faith is between God and man only; not between man and man: and to God no man can be an hypocrite: therefore no virtue is certain and universal but that of faith.

Q. What is the farther excellence of faith?

A. It subdues and extinguishes the pride of reason, and gives to God all the glory of our salvation. Reason raises questions against the word of God; as Sarah laughed at the promise; but faith receives it, as Abraham believed the promise, and it was *accounted to him for righteousness* *.

* Divines, in the early days of the Reformation, spoke very differently of human reason, from what we have heard in later times

Q. Are the moral virtues commanded in the Gospel?

A. Faith does not make void the moral law, but establishes moral obedience, and far exalts the nature of it, and gives us the only true and powerful motives to the performance of it. They are therefore all of them particularly commanded—*Owe no man any thing—He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things—Take heed to yourselves that ye be not deceived—Speak the truth with boldness—Add to your faith virtue,* that is, *fortitude.*

Q. What encouragement have we to practise the virtues thus commanded?

A. An assurance that a crown of victory is laid up for him, who by *adding virtue* to his *faith,* demonstrates its reality, by overcoming the temptations of the world and the flesh.

Q. What is *deism?*

A. It is the affectation of morality, without Christian piety.

Q. Who are deists?

A. They call themselves, as the moral heathens did, *philosophers,* and set up *natural religion* against the Bible.

Q. And is not natural religion a good thing?

A. The testimony of nature to religious truth, so far as it will go, is good: but natural religion hath been vended as a thing which man can find out for himself by the light of nature and reason only.

Q. Does it agree with the Gospel?

A. Not at all: it has neither Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost: no fall of man; no atonement for sin; no grace; no sanctification; no sacraments; no devil;

—*Pictas conculcat rationem, oblatrantem canem*—"Piety trampleth upon reason, that barking dog." Commenii orbis pictas. Ch. Religio.

no church; no communion of saints; no resurrection; no life everlasting.

Q. When did it first arise among Christians?

A. It was brought into fashion by some philosophising divines of the last century, of whom the chief was Bishop Wilkins, a person who had conceived the project of flying up to the moon, and sat very loose as to all the discriminations between the church and the conventicle. At first it was a sort of *neutral* between Christianity and heathenism, and was accommodated to the former; but of late it hath been severed from Christianity, and is now much more nearly allied to heathenism.

Q. What effect hath it had?

A. It has given great advantage to unbelievers; who have more securely attacked the doctrines of the Christian faith, as absolutely false, or at best superfluous and unnecessary. It has banished Christianity from many of our pulpits; and introduced many corrupt interpretations of the Scripture, and it has given occasion to the Methodists, to set up their tabernacles for the preservation of that faith, which seemed to be departing from the Church.

Q. What religion had the heathens?

A. Not natural religion, but traditionary idolatry; whose rites of worship agreed in many articles with the divine law. The heathens never depended for acceptance on any of their moral works; but always had recourse to rites, sacrifices, supplications, and other acts of what is called *devotion,* for the pardon of sin, and the averting of divine vengeance.

See the 11th, 12th, and 13th Articles of Religion.

END OF VOL. V.

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